

Part 7

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The  
**OUTLINE of HISTORY**  
BY  
**H. G. WELLS.**



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GREEK DIVINITIES (POSEIDON, DIONYSUS, AND DEMETER) ON THE PARTHENON FRIEZE.



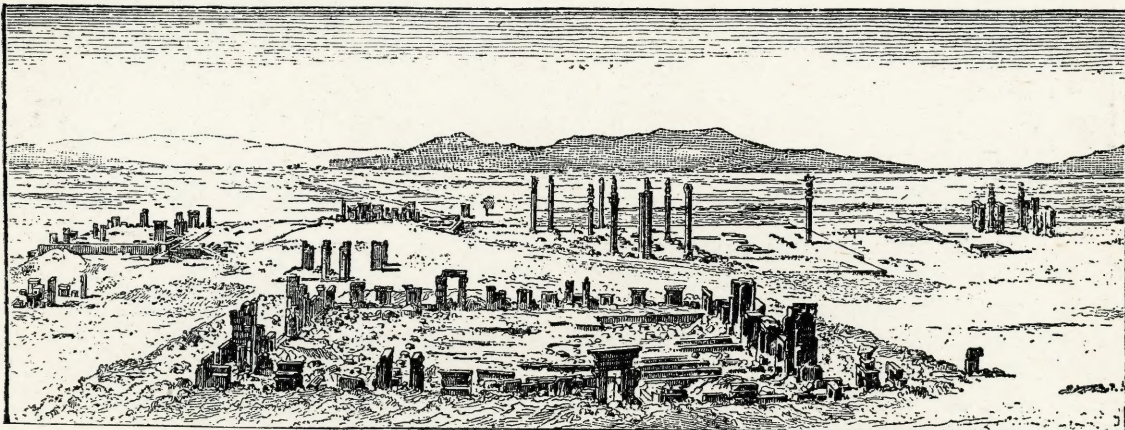
under Chaldean rule, the Second Babylonian Empire. The Scythian allies of Assyria drop out of the story after this. They go on living their own life away to the north without much interference with the peoples to the south. A glance at the map of this period shows how, for two-thirds of a century, the Second Babylonian Empire lay like a lamb within the embrace of the Median lion.

Into the internal struggles of the Medes and Persians, that ended at last in the accession of Cyrus "the Persian" to the throne of Cyaxares in 550 B.C., we will not enter. In that year Cyrus was ruling over an empire that

short the power of the Persians, if by any means he might, while yet it was in growth and before they should have become great."

He then made trial of the various oracles. His method of trial we will not relate here, but it led him to the belief that the Delphi Oracle was alone trustworthy. What follows is rather a lengthy passage, but it is so characteristic of the garrulousness and wonder-loving mind of the Father of History, and with such a pleasant touch of spite against the Lacedemonians, that it is impossible to resist the quotation.

"After this, with great sacrifices, he endeavoured to win the favour of the god at



RUINS OF PERSEPOLIS. (After M. Dieulafoy, *L'art antique de la Perse*.)

reached from the boundaries of Lydia to Persia and perhaps to India. Nabonidus, the last of the Babylonian rulers, was, as we have already told, digging up old records and building temples in Babylonia.

### § 6

But one monarch in the world was alive to the threat of the new power that lay in the hands of Cyrus. This was Crœsus, the Lydian king. His son had been killed in a very tragic manner, which Herodotus relates, but which we will not describe here. Says Herodotus:

"For two years then, Crœsus remained quiet in great mourning, because he was deprived of his son; but after this period of time, the overthrowing of the rule of the son of Cyaxares by Cyrus, and the growing greatness of the Persians, caused Crœsus to cease from his mourning, and led him to a care of cutting

Delphi: for of all the animals that are fit for sacrifice he offered three thousand of each kind, and he heaped up couches overlaid with gold and overlaid with silver, and cups of gold, and robes of purple, and tunics, making of them a great pyre, and this he burnt up, hoping by these means the more to win over the god to the side of the Lydians; and he proclaimed to all the Lydians that every one of them should make sacrifice with that which each man had. And when he had finished the sacrifice, he melted down a vast quantity of gold, and of it he wrought half-plinths, making them six palms in length and three in breadth, and in height one palm; and their number was one hundred and seventeen. Of these four were of pure gold weighing two talents and a half each, and the others of gold alloyed with silver weighing two talents. And he caused to be made also an image of a lion of pure gold weighing ten talents; which lion, when the temple at Delphi was

The Story  
of Crœsus.





*Photo: Mansell.*

500 B.C. MEN BRINGING CHARIOTS, RINGS AND WREATHS. RELIEF FROM PERSEPOLIS.

being burnt down, fell from off the half-plinths, for upon these it was set, and is placed now in the treasury of the Corinthians, weighing six talents and a half, for three talents and a half were melted away from it. So Cræsus, having finished all these things, sent them to Delphi, and with them these besides: two mixing-bowls of great size, one of gold and the other of silver, of which the golden bowl was placed on the right hand as one enters the temple, and the silver on the left, but the places of these also were changed after the temple was burnt down. . . . Moreover, Cræsus sent four silver wine-jars, which stand in the treasury of the Corinthians, and two vessels for lustral water, one of gold and the other of silver, of which the gold one is inscribed 'from the Lacedemonians,' who say that it is their offering; therein, however, they do not speak rightly, for this also is from Cræsus, but one of the Delphians wrote the inscription upon it, desiring to gratify the Lacedemonians; and his name I know, but I will not make mention of it. . . . And many other votive offerings Cræsus sent with these, not specially distinguished, among which are certain castings of silver of a round shape, and also a golden

figure of a woman three cubits high, which the Delphians say is a statue of the baker of Cræsus. Moreover, Cræsus dedicated the ornaments from his wife's neck and her girdles. . . .

"To the Lydians who were to carry these gifts to the temples Cræsus gave charge that they should ask the Oracles this question also: whether Cræsus should march against the Persians, and, if so, whether he should join with himself any army of men as his friends. And when the Lydians had arrived at the places to which they had been sent and had dedicated the votive offerings, they inquired of the Oracles, and said: 'Cræsus, king of the Lydians and of other nations, considering that these are the only true Oracles among men, presents to you gifts such as your revelations deserve, and asks you again now whether he shall march against the Persians, and, if so, whether he shall join with himself any army of men as allies.' They inquired thus, and the answers of both the Oracles agreed in one, declaring to Cræsus that if he should march against the Persians he should destroy a great empire. . . . So when the answers were brought back and Cræsus heard them, he was delighted with the oracles, and expecting that he would certainly destroy



the kingdom of Cyrus, he sent again to Pytho, and presented to the men of Delphi, having ascertained the number of them, two staters of gold for each man: and in return for this the Delphians gave to Crœsus and to the Lydians precedence in consulting the Oracle and freedom from all payments, and the right to front seats at the games, with this privilege also for all time, that any one of them who wished should be allowed to become a citizen of Delphi."

But here we may not run on as Herodotus loved to do. Suffice it to say that Crœsus made a defensive alliance both with the Lacedæmonians and the Egyptians. We will not quote the story of how a great bronze mixing-bowl that the Lacedæmonians sent to Crœsus went astray, but we will note a light on the life of the Medes and Persians of that time.

"Thus, then it happened about the mixing-bowl; but meanwhile Crœsus, mistaking the meaning of the Oracle, was making a march into Cappadocia, expecting to overthrow Cyrus and the power of the Persians; and while Crœsus was preparing to march against the Persians, one of the Lydians, who even before this time was thought to be a wise man, but in consequence of this opinion got a very great name for wisdom among the Lydians, had advised Crœsus as follows: 'O king, thou art preparing to march against men who wear breeches of leather, and the rest of their clothing is of leather also; and they eat food not such as they desire, but such as they can obtain, dwelling in a land which is rugged; and, moreover, they make no use of wine but drink water; and no figs have they for dessert, nor any other good thing. On the one hand, if thou shalt overcome them, what wilt thou take away from them, seeing they have nothing? and, on the other

hand, if thou shalt be overcome, consider how many good things thou wilt lose; for once having tasted our good things, they will cling to them fast, and it will not be possible to drive them away. I, for my own part, feel gratitude to the gods that they do not put it into the minds of the Persians to march against the Lydians.' Thus he spoke not persuading Crœsus; for it is true indeed that the Persians before they subdued the Lydians had no luxury nor any good thing."

Crœsus and Cyrus fought an indecisive battle at Pteria, from which Crœsus retreated. Cyrus followed him up, and he gave battle outside his capital town of Sardis. The chief strength of the Lydians lay in their cavalry; they were excellent, if undisciplined, horsemen, and fought with long spears.

"Cyrus, when he saw the Lydians being arrayed for battle, fearing their horsemen, did on the suggestion of Harpagos, a Mede, as follows: All the camels which were in the train of his army carrying provisions and baggage he gathered together, and he took off their burdens and set men upon them provided with the equipment of cavalry; and, having thus furnished them, forth he appointed them to go in front of the rest of the army towards the horsemen of Crœsus; and after the camel-troop he ordered the infantry to follow; and

behind the infantry he placed his whole force of cavalry. Then, when all his men had been placed in their several positions, he charged them to spare none of the other Lydians, slaying all who might come in their way, but Crœsus himself they were not to slay, not even if he should make resistance when he was being captured. Such was his charge: and he set the camels opposite the horsemen for this reason,—because the horse has a



Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd, D.S.O.  
A CORNER IN SUSA TO-DAY.



fear of the camel and cannot endure either to see his form or to scent his smell: for this reason then the trick had been devised, in order that the cavalry of Crœsus might be useless, that very force wherewith the Lydian king was expecting most to shine. And as they were coming together to the battle, so soon as the horses scented the camels and saw them, they turned away back, and the hopes of Crœsus were at once brought to nought. The Lydians, however, for their part did not upon that act as cowards, but when they perceived what was coming to pass, they leapt from their horses and fought with the Persians on foot. At length, however, when many had fallen on either side, the Lydians turned to flight; and

to Crœsus as he stood upon the pyre there came, although he was in such evil case, a memory of the saying of Solon, how he had said with divine inspiration that no one of the living might be called happy. And when this thought came into his mind, they say that he sighed deeply and groaned aloud, having been for long silent, and three times he uttered the name of Solon. Hearing this, Cyrus bade the interpreters ask Crœsus who was this person on whom he called; and they came near and asked. And Crœsus for a time, it is said, kept silence when he was asked this, but afterwards, being pressed, he said: 'One whom more than much wealth I should have desired to have speech with all monarchs.' Then, since his



*Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd.*

SUSA TO-DAY.

having been driven within the wall of their fortress, they were besieged by the Persians."

In fourteen days Sardis was stormed and Crœsus taken prisoner. . . .

"So the Persians having taken him brought him into the presence of Cyrus; and he piled up a great pyre and caused Crœsus to go up upon it bound in fetters, and along with him twice seven sons of Lydians, whether it was that he meant to dedicate this offering as first-fruits of his victory to some god, or whether he desired to fulfil a vow, or else had heard that Crœsus was a god-fearing man, and so caused him to go up on the pyre because he wished to know if any one of the divine powers would save him, so that he should not be burnt alive. He, they say, did this; but

words were of doubtful import, they asked again of that which he said; and as they were urgent with him and gave him no peace, he told how once Solon, an Athenian, had come and having inspected all his wealth had made light of it, with such and such words; and how all had turned out for him according as Solon had said, not speaking at all especially with a view to Crœsus himself, but with a view to the whole human race, and especially those who seem to themselves to be happy men. And while Crœsus related these things, already the pyre was lighted and the edges of it round about were burning. Then they say that Cyrus, hearing from the interpreters what Crœsus had said, changed his purpose and considered that he himself also was but a man,

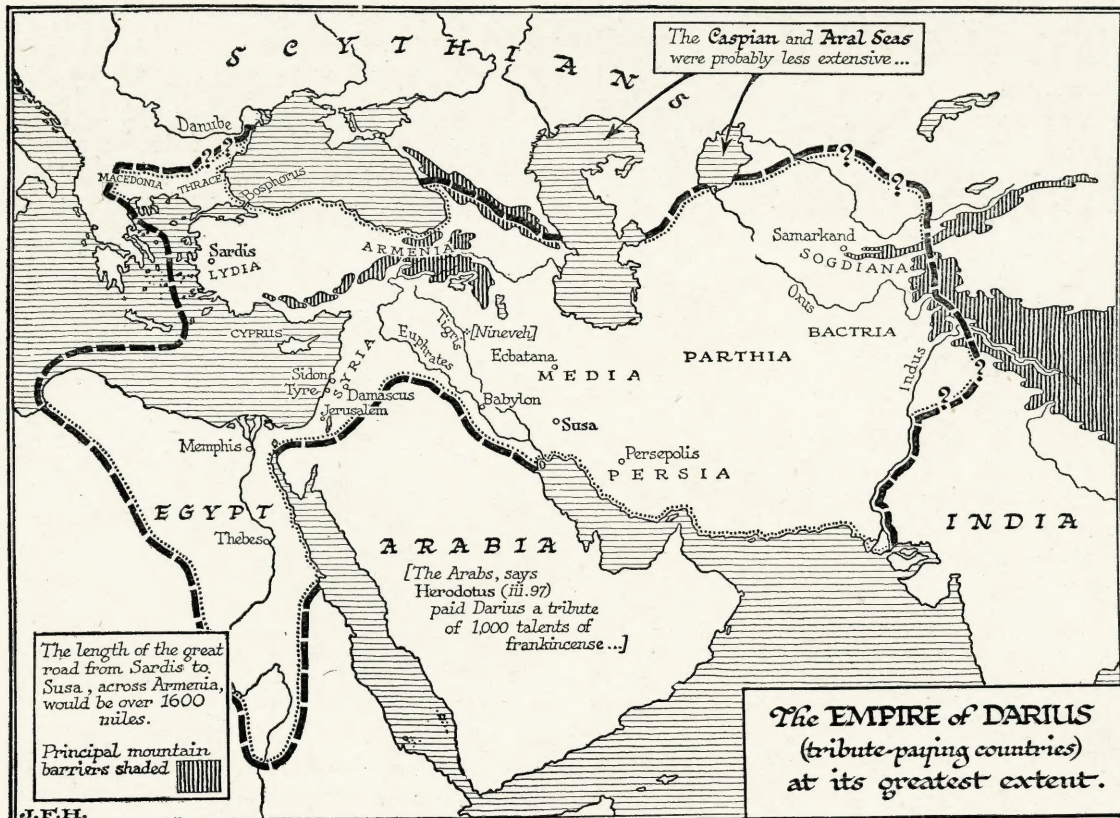


and that he was delivering another man, who had been not inferior to himself in felicity, alive to the fire; and, moreover, he feared the requital, and reflected that there was nothing of that which men possessed which was secure; therefore, they say, he ordered them to extinguish as quickly as possible the fire that was burning, and to bring down Crœsus and those who were with him from the pyre; and they, using endeavours, were not able now to get the mastery of the flames. Then it is related by the Lydians that Crœsus, having learned how Cyrus had changed his mind, and seeing that every one was trying to put out the fire, but that they were no longer able to check it, cried aloud, entreating Apollo that if any gift had ever been given by him which was acceptable to the god, he would come to his aid and rescue him from the evil which was now upon him. So he with tears entreated the god, and suddenly, they say, after clear sky and calm weather clouds gathered and a storm burst, and it rained with a very violent shower, and the pyre was extinguished. Then Cyrus, having

perceived that Crœsus was a lover of the gods and a good man, caused him to be brought down from the pyre and asked him as follows: 'Crœsus, tell me who of all men was it who persuaded thee to march upon my land and so to become an enemy to me instead of a friend?' And he said: 'O king, I did this to thy felicity and to my own misfortune, and the causer of this was the god of the Hellenes, who incited me to march with my army. For no one is so senseless as to choose of his own will war rather than peace, since in peace the sons bury their fathers, but in war the fathers bury their sons. But it was pleasing, I suppose, to the divine powers that these things should come to pass thus.'"

But Herodotus is too alluring a companion for one who would write an Outline of History; and the rest of the life of Crœsus, and how he gave wise counsels to Cyrus, must be read in his ampler page.

When Lydia was subdued, Cyrus turned his attention to Nabonidus in Babylon. He defeated the Babylonian army, under Belshazzar, outside Babylon, and then laid siege





to the town. He entered the town (538 B.C.), probably as we have already suggested, with the connivance of the priests of Bel.

### § 7

Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses, who took an army into Egypt (525 B.C.).

**Darius  
invades  
Russia.**

There was a battle in the delta, in which Greek mercenaries fought on both sides. Herodotus declares that he saw the bones of the slain still lying on the field fifty or sixty years later, and comments on the comparative thinness of the Persian skulls. After this battle Cambyses took Memphis and most of Egypt.



Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd.

AN OLD UNFINISHED LION FROM THE TIME OF DARIUS.

This lion lies neglected beside an old side-road close to Hamadan, Persia.

In Egypt, we are told, Cambyses went mad. He took great liberties with the Egyptian temples, and remained at Memphis "opening ancient tombs and examining the dead bodies." He had already murdered both Croesus, ex-king of Lydia, and his own brother Smerdis before coming to Egypt, and he died in Syria on the way back to Susa of an accidental wound, leaving no heirs to succeed him. He was presently succeeded by Darius the Mede (521 B.C.), the son of Hystaspes, one of the chief councillors of Cyrus.

The empire of Darius I was larger than any one of the preceding empires whose growth we have traced. It included all Asia Minor and Syria, that is to say, the ancient Lydian and

Hittite empires, all the old Assyrian and Babylonian empires, Egypt, the Caucasus and Caspian regions, Media, Persia, and it extended, perhaps, into India to the Indus. The nomadic Arabians alone of all the peoples of what is nowadays called the Near East, did not pay tribute to the satraps (provincial governors) of Darius. The organization of this great empire seems to have been on a much higher level of efficiency than any of its precursors. Great arterial roads joined province to province, and there was a system of royal posts;<sup>1</sup> at stated intervals post horses stood always ready to carry the government messenger, or the traveller if he had a government permit, on to the next stage of his journey. Apart from this imperial right-of-way and the payment of tribute, the local governments possessed a very considerable amount of local freedom. They were restrained from internecine conflict, which was all to their own good. And at first the Greek cities of the mainland of Asia paid the tribute and shared in this Persian Peace.

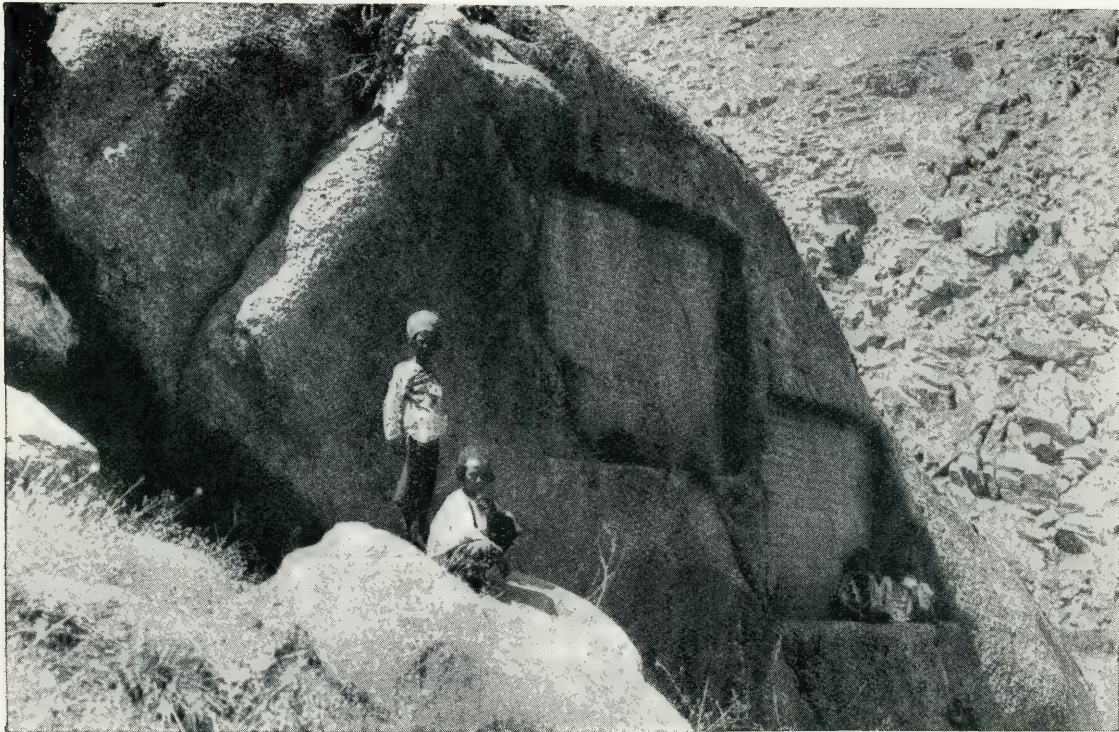
Darius was first incited to attack the Greeks in Europe by a homesick Greek physician at his court, who wanted at any cost to be back in Greece. Darius had already made plans for an expedition into Europe, aiming not at Greece, but to the northward of Greece, across the Bosphorus and Danube. He wanted to strike at South Russia, which he believed to be the home country of the Scythian nomads who threatened him on his northern and north-eastern frontiers. But he lent an attentive ear to the tempter, and sent agents into Greece.<sup>2</sup>

This great expedition of Darius opens out our view in this history. It lifts a curtain upon the Balkan country behind Greece—about which we have said nothing hitherto; it carries us to and over the Danube. The nucleus of his army marched from Susa, gathering up contingents as they made their way to the Bosphorus. Here Greek allies (Ionian Greeks from Asia) had made a bridge of boats, and the army crossed over while the Greek allies sailed on in their ships to the Danube, and, two days' sail up from its mouth, landed to make another

<sup>1</sup> But a thousand years earlier the Hittites seem to have had paved high roads running across their country.

<sup>2</sup> But cp. Bury's *History of Greece*, ch. vi., § 5.





*Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd.*

TABLETS CUT IN THE ROCKS BESIDE AN ANCIENT ROAD USED BY DARIUS THROUGH THE HILLS  
WITHIN FIVE MILES OF HAMADAN.

floating bridge. Meanwhile, Darius and his host advanced along the coast of what is now Bulgaria, but which was then called Thrace. They crossed the Danube, and prepared to give battle to the Scythian army and take the cities of the Scythians.

But the Scythians had no cities, and they evaded a battle, and the war degenerated into a tedious and hopeless pursuit of more mobile enemies. Wells were stopped up and pastures destroyed by the nomads. The Scythian horsemen hung upon the skirts of the great army, which consisted mostly of foot soldiers, picking off stragglers and preventing foraging; and they did their best to persuade the Ionian Greeks, who had made and were guarding the bridge across the Danube, to break up the bridge, and so ensure the destruction of Darius. So long as Darius continued to advance, however, the loyalty of his Greek allies remained unshaken.

But privation, fatigue, and sickness hindered and crippled the Persian army; Darius lost many stragglers and consumed his supplies, and at last the melancholy conviction dawned upon

him that a retreat across the Danube was necessary to save him from complete exhaustion and defeat.

In order to get a start in his retreat he sacrificed his sick and wounded. He had these men informed that he was about to attack the Scythians at nightfall, and under this pretence stole out of the camp with the pick of his troops and made off southward, leaving the camp fires burning and the usual noises and movements of the camp behind him. Next day the men left in the camp realized the trick their monarch had played upon them, and surrendered themselves to the mercy of the Scythians; but Darius had got his start, and was able to reach the bridge of boats before his pursuers came upon him. They were more mobile than his troops, but they missed their quarry in the darkness. At the river the retreating Persians "were brought to an extremity of fear," for they found the bridge partially broken down and its northern end destroyed.

At this point a voice echoes down the centuries to us. We see a group of dismayed Persians standing about the Great King upon



the bank of the streaming river; we see the masses of halted troops, hungry and war-worn; a trail of battered transport stretches away towards the horizon, upon which at any time the advance guards of the pursuers may appear. There is not much noise in spite of the multitude, but rather an inquiring silence. Standing out like a pier from the further side of the great stream are the remains of the bridge of boats, an enigma. . . . We cannot discern whether there are men over there or not. The shipping of the Ionian Greeks seems still to be drawn up on the further shore, but it is all very far away.

"Now there was with Darius an Egyptian who had a voice louder than that of any other man on earth, and this man Darius ordered to take his stand upon the bank of the Ister (Danube) and to call Histiaëus of Miletus."

This worthy—a day is to come, as we have already noted, when his decapitated head will be sent to Darius at Susa—appears approaching slowly across the waters in a boat.

There is a parley, and we gather that it is "all right."

The explanation Histiaëus has to make is a complicated one. Some Scythians have been and have gone again. Scouts, perhaps, these were. It would seem there had been a discussion between the Scythians and the Greeks. The Scythians wanted the bridge broken down; they would then, they said, undertake to finish up the Persian army and make an end to Darius and his empire, and the Ionian Greeks of Asia could then free their cities again. Miltiades, the Athenian, was for accepting this proposal. But Histiaëus had been more subtle. He would prefer, he said, to see the Persians completely destroyed before definitely abandoning their cause. Would the Scythians go back and destroy the Persians to make sure of them while the Greeks on their part destroyed the bridge? Anyhow, whichever side the Greeks took finally, it was clear to him that it would be wise to destroy the northern end of the bridge, because otherwise the Scythians might



*Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd.*

THE CARVINGS AT BISITUN, NEAR KERMANSHAH, PERSIA, SHOWING DARIUS, NINE KINGS HE CONQUERED BEFORE HIM, ONE OTHER BENEATH HIS FEET, AND TWO OF HIS MINISTERS OR COUNCILLORS BEHIND HIM. TO ONE SIDE AND BENEATH ARE TABLETS IN THREE LANGUAGES DESCRIBING HIS EXPLOITS.



rush it. Indeed, even as they parleyed the Greeks set to work to demolish the end that linked them to the Scythians as quickly as possible. In accordance with the suggestions of Histiaeus the Scythians rode off in search of the Persians, and so left the Greeks safe in either event. If Darius escaped, they could be on his side; if he was destroyed, there was nothing of which the Scythians could complain.

Histiaeus did not put it quite in that fashion to Darius. He had at least kept the shipping and most of the bridge. He represented himself as the loyal friend of Persia, and Darius was not disposed to be too critical. The Ionian ships came over. With a sense of immense relief the remnant of the wasted Persians were presently looking back at the steely flood of the Danube streaming wide between themselves and their pursuers. . . .

The pleasure and interest had gone out of the European expedition for Darius. He returned to Susa, leaving an army in Thrace, under a trusted general Megabazus. This Megabazus set himself to the subjugation of Thrace, and among other states which submitted reluctantly to Darius was a kingdom, which thus comes into our history for the first time, the kingdom of Macedonia, a country inhabited by a people so closely allied to the Greeks that one of its princes had already been allowed to compete and take a prize in the Olympian games.

Darius was disposed to reward Histiaeus by allowing him to build a city for himself in Thrace, but Megabazus had a different opinion of the trustworthiness of Histiaeus, and prevailed upon the king to take him to Susa, and, under the title of councillor, to keep him a prisoner there. Histiaeus was at first flattered by this



*Photo: Major W. J. P. Rodd.*

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE CARVINGS AT BISITUN, NEAR KERMANSHAH, PERSIA.

court position, and then realized its true meaning. The Persian court bored him, and he grew homesick for Miletus. He set himself to make mischief, and was able to stir up a revolt against the Persians among the Ionian Greeks on the mainland. The twistings and turnings of the story, which included the burning of Sardis by the Ionians and the defeat of a Greek fleet at the battle of Lade (495 B.C.), are too complicated to follow here. It is a dark and intricate story of treacheries, cruelties, and hate, in which the death of the wily Histiaeus shines almost cheerfully. The Persian governor of Sardis, through which town he was being taken on his way back to Susa as a prisoner, having much the same opinion of him as Megabazus had, and knowing his ability to humbug Darius, killed him there



and then, and sent on the head only to his master.

Cyprus and the Greek islands were dragged into this contest that Histiaëus had stirred up, and at last Athens. Darius realized the error he had made in turning to the right and not to the left when he had crossed the Bosphorus, and he now set himself to the conquest of all Greece. He began with the islands. Tyre and Sidon were subject to Persia, and ships of the

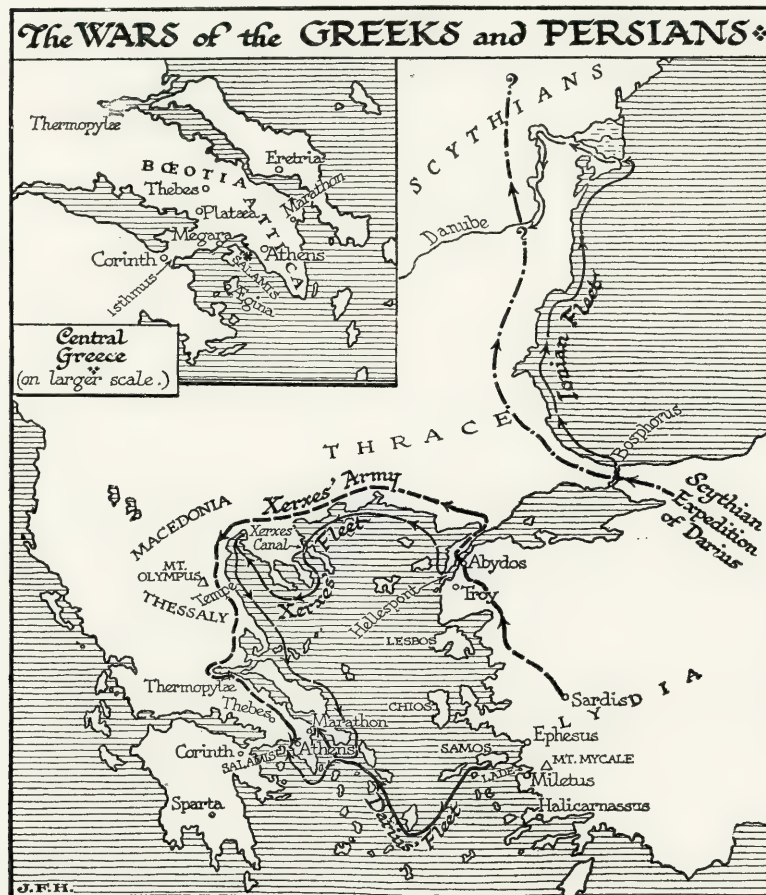
expedition made a landing near Marathon in Attica. The Persians were guided into Marathon by a renegade Greek, Hippias, the son of Peisistratus, who had been tyrant of Athens. If Athens fell, then Hippias was to be its tyrant, under the protection of the Persians. Meanwhile, so urgent was the sense of a crisis in the affairs of Hellas, that a man, a herald and runner, went from Athens to Sparta, forgetful of all feuds, to say: "Lacedemonians,

the Athenians make request of you to come to their help, and not to allow a city most anciently established among the Hellenes to fall into slavery by the means of Barbarians; for even now Eretria has been enslaved and Hellas has become the weaker by a city of renown." This man, Pheidippides, did the distance from Athens to Sparta, nearly a hundred miles as the crow flies, and much more if we allow for the contours and the windings of the way, in something under eight and forty hours.

But before the Spartans could arrive on the scene the battle was joined. The Athenians charged the enemy. They fought—"in a memorable fashion: for they were the first of all the Hellenes about whom we know who went to attack the enemy at a run,

and they were the first also who endured to face the Median garments and the men who wore them, whereas up to this time the very name of the Medes was to the Hellenes a terror to hear."

The Persian wings gave before this impetuous attack, but the centre held. The Athenians, however, were cool as well as vigorous; they let the wings run and closed in on the flanks of the centre, whereupon the main body of the Persians fled to their ships. Seven vessels fell



Phœnician and of the Ionian Greeks provided the Persians with a fleet by means of which one Greek island after another was subjugated.

### § 8

The first attack upon Greece proper was made in 490 B.C. It was a sea attack upon Athens, with a force long and carefully prepared for the task, the fleet being provided with specially built transports for the conveyance of horses. This

**The Battle of Marathon.**



into the hands of the Athenians ; the rest got away, and, after a futile attempt to sail round to Athens and seize the city before the army returned thither, the fleet made a retreat to Asia. Let Herodotus close the story with a paragraph that still further enlightens us upon the tremendous prestige of the Medes at this time :

“ Of the Lacedemonians there came to Athens two thousand after the full moon, making great haste to be in time, so that they arrived in Attica on the third day after leaving Sparta : and though they had come too late for the battle, yet they desired to behold the Medes ; and accordingly they went on to Marathon and looked at the bodies of the slain : then afterwards they departed home, commending the Athenians and the work which they had done.”

### § 9

So Greece, unified for a while by fear, gained her first victory over Persia. The news came to Darius simultaneously with the news of a rebellion in Egypt, and he died while still undecided in which direction to turn. His son and successor, Xerxes, turned first to Egypt and set up a Persian satrap there ; then for four years he prepared a second attack upon Greece. Says Herodotus, who was, one must remember, a patriotic

Thermo-  
pylæ and  
Salamis.

Greek, approaching now to the climax of his History :

“ For what nation did Xerxes not lead out of Asia against Hellas ? and what water was not exhausted, being drunk by his host, except only the great rivers ? For some supplied ships, and others were appointed to serve in the land-army ; to some it was appointed to furnish cavalry, and to others vessels to carry horses, while they served in the expedition themselves also ; others were ordered to furnish ships of war for the bridges, and others again ships with provisions.”

Xerxes passed into Europe, not as Darius did at the half-mile crossing of the Bosphorus, but at the Hellespont (= the Dardanelles). In his account of the assembling of the great army, and its march from Sardis to the Hellespont, the poet in Herodotus takes possession of the historian. The great host passes in splendour by Troy, and Xerxes, who although a Persian and a Barbarian, seems to have had the advantages of a classical education, turns aside, says our historian, to visit the citadel of Priam. The Hellespont was bridged at Abydos, and upon a hill was set a marble throne from which Xerxes surveyed the whole array of his forces.

“ And seeing all the Hellespont covered over with the ships and all the shores and the plains



Photo: Alinari.

REMAINS OF THE SUPPOSED TOMB OF MILTIADES AT MARATHON.



of Abydos full of men, then Xerxes pronounced himself a happy man, and after that he fell to weeping. Artabanus, his uncle, therefore perceiving him—the same who at first boldly declared his opinion advising Xerxes not to march against Hellas—this man, I say, having observed that Xerxes wept, asked as follows: ‘O king, how far different from one another are the things which thou hast done now and a short while before now! for having pronounced thyself a happy man, thou art now shedding tears.’ He said: ‘Yea, for after I had reckoned up, it came into my mind to feel pity at the thought how brief was the whole life

where, at that time—2,300 years have altered these things greatly—there was a great cliff on the landward side and the sea to the east, with a track scarcely wide enough for a chariot between. The great advantage to the Greeks of this position at Thermopylæ was that it prevented the use of either cavalry or chariots, and narrowed the battle front so as to minimize their numerical inequality. And there the Persians joined battle with them one summer day in the year 480 B.C.

For three days the Greeks held this great army, and did them much damage with small loss to themselves, and then on the third day



Photo: Alinari.

FRIEZE FROM THE TREASURY OF THE CNIDIANS (DATING FROM 530 B.C.) AT DELPHI, SHOWING GREEK WARRIORS.

of man, seeing that of these multitudes not one will be alive when a hundred years have gone by.’ ”

This may not be exact history, but it is great poetry. It is as splendid as anything in *The Dynasts*.

The Persian fleet, coasting from headland to headland, accompanied this land multitude during its march southward; but a violent storm did the fleet great damage and 400 ships were lost, including much corn transport. At first the united Hellenes marched out to meet the invaders at the Vale of Tempe near Mount Olympus, but afterwards retreated through Thessaly, and chose at last to await the advancing Persians at a place called Thermopylæ,

a detachment of Persians appeared upon the rear of the Greeks, having learnt of a way over the mountains from a peasant. There were hasty discussions among the Greeks; some were for withdrawing, some for holding out. The leader of the whole force, Leonidas, was for staying; and with him he would keep, he said, 300 Spartans. The rest of the Greek army could, meanwhile, make good its retreat to the next defensible pass. The Thespian contingent of 700, however, refused to fall back. They preferred to stay and die with the Spartans. Also a contingent of 400 Thebans remained. As Thebes afterwards joined the Persians, there is a story that these Thebans were detained by force against their will, which



seems on military as well as historical grounds improbable. These 1,400 stayed, and were, after a conflict of heroic quality, slain to a man. Two Spartans happened to be away, sick with ophthalmia. When they heard the news, one was too ill to move; the other made his helot guide him to the battle, and there struck blindly until he was killed. The other, Aristodemus, was taken away with the retreating troops, and returned to Sparta, where he was not actually punished for his conduct, but was known as Tresas, "the man who retreated." It was enough to distinguish him from all other Spartans, and he got himself killed at the Battle of Plataea a year later, performing prodigies of reckless courage. . . . For a whole day this little band had held the pass, assailed in front and rear by the whole force of the Persians. They had covered the retreat of the main Greek army, they had inflicted great losses on the invaders, and they had raised the prestige of the Greek warrior over that of the Mede higher even than the victory of Marathon had done.

The Persian cavalry and transport filtered slowly through the narrow passage of Thermopylae, and marched on towards Athens, while a series of naval encounters went on at sea. The Hellenic fleet retreated before the advance of the Persian shipping, which suffered seriously through its comparative ignorance of the intricate coasts and of the tricks of the local weather. Weight of numbers carried the Persian army forward to Athens; now that Thermopylae was lost, there was no line of defence nearer than the Isthmus of Corinth, and this meant the abandonment of all the intervening territory, including Athens. The population had either to fly or submit to the Persians. Thebes with all Boeotia submitted, and was pressed into the Persian army, except one town, Plataea, whose inhabitants fled to Athens. The turn of Athens came next, and great efforts were made to persuade her to make terms; but, instead, the whole population determined to abandon everything and take to the shipping. The women and non-combatants were carried to Salamis and various adjacent islands. Only a few people too old to move and a few dissentients remained in the town, which was occupied by the Persians and burnt. The

sacred objects, statues, etc., which were burnt at this time, were afterwards buried in the Acropolis by the returning Athenians, and have been dug up in our own day with the marks of burning visible upon them. Xerxes sent off a mounted messenger to Susa with the news, and he invited the sons of Peisistratus, whom he had brought back with him, to enter upon their inheritance and sacrifice after the Athenian manner upon the Acropolis.

Meanwhile, the Hellenic confederate fleet had come round to Salamis, and in the council of war there were bitter differences of opinion. Corinth and the states behind the Isthmus wanted the fleet to fall back to that position, abandoning the cities of Megara and Aegina. Themistocles insisted with all his force on fighting in the narrows of Salamis. The majority was steadily in favour of retreat, when there suddenly arrived the news that retreat was cut off. The Persians had sailed round Salamis and held the sea on the other side. This news was brought by that Aristides the Just, of whose ostracism we have already told; his sanity and eloquence did much to help Themistocles to hearten the hesitating commanders. These two men had formerly been bitter antagonists; but, with a generosity rare in those days, they forgot their differences before the common danger. At dawn the Greek ships pulled out to battle.

The fleet before them was a fleet more composite and less united than their own. But it was about three times as great. On one wing were the Phœnicians, on the other Ionian Greeks from Asia and the Islands. Some of the latter fought stoutly; others remembered that they too were Greeks. The Greek ships, on the other hand, were mostly manned by freemen fighting for their homes. Throughout the early hours the battle raged confusedly. Then it became evident to Xerxes, watching the combat, that his fleet was attempting flight. The flight became disaster.

Xerxes had taken his seat to watch the battle. He saw his galleys rammed by the sharp prows of other galleys; his fighting-men shot down; his ships boarded. Much of the sea-fighting in those days was done by ramming; the big galleys bore down their opponents by superior weight of impact, or sheared off their oars and



so destroyed their manœuvring power and left them helpless. Presently, Xerxes saw that some of his broken ships were surrendering. In the water he could see the heads of Greeks swimming to land; but "of the Barbarians the greater number perished in the sea, not knowing how to swim." The clumsy attempt of the hard-pressed first line of the Persian fleet to put about led to indescribable confusion. Some were rammed by the rear ships of their own side. This ancient shipping was poor, unseaworthy stuff by any modern standards. The west wind was blowing, and many of the broken ships of Xerxes were now drifting away out of his sight to be wrecked on the coast



*Photo: Mansell.*

HELMET OF "CORINTHIAN" TYPE, INSCRIBED WITH DEDICATION TO ZEUS, FROM NEAR OLYMPIA.

beyond. Others were being towed towards Salamis by the Greeks. Others, less injured and still in fighting trim, were making for the beaches close beneath him that would bring them under the protection of his army. Scattered over the further sea, beyond the headlands, remote and vague, were ships in flight and Greek ships in pursuit. Slowly, incident by incident, the disaster had unfolded under his eyes. We can imagine something of the coming and going of messengers, the issuing of futile orders, the changes of plan, throughout the day. In the morning Xerxes had come out provided with tables to mark the most successful of his commanders for reward. In the gold of the sunset he beheld the sea power of Persia utterly scattered, sunken, and destroyed, and

the Greek fleet over against Salamis unbroken and triumphant, ordering its ranks, as if still incredulous of victory.

The Persian army remained as if in indecision for some days close to the scene of this sea fight, and then began to retreat to Thessaly, where it was proposed to winter and resume the campaign. But Xerxes, like Darius I before him, had conceived a disgust for European campaigns. He was afraid of the destruction of the bridge of boats. With part of the army he went on to the Hellespont, leaving the main force in Thessaly under a general, Mardonius. Of his own retreat the historian relates:

"Whithersoever they came on the march and to whatever nation they seized the crops of that people and used them for provisions; and if they found no crops, then they took the grass which was growing up from the earth, and stripped off the bark from the trees and plucked down the leaves and devoured them; alike of the cultivated trees and of those growing wild; and they left nothing behind them: thus they did by reason of famine. Then plague too seized upon the army and dysentery, which destroyed them by the way, and some of them also who were sick the king left behind, laying charge upon the cities where at the time he chanced to be in his march, to take care of them and support them; of these he left some in Thessaly, and some at Siris in Paionia, and some in Macedonia. . . . When, passing on from Thrace they came to the passage, they crossed over the Hellespont in haste to Abydos by means of the ships, for they did not find the floating bridges still stretched across, but broken up by a storm. While staying there for a time they had distributed to them an allowance of food more abundant than they had had by the way, and from satisfying their hunger without restraint and also from the changes of water there died many of those in the army who had remained safe till then. The rest arrived with Xerxes at Sardis."

#### § 10

Plataea and Mycale. The rest of the Persian army remained in Thessaly under the command of Mardonius, and for a year he maintained an aggressive campaign against



the Greeks. Finally, he was defeated and killed in a pitched battle at Plataea (479 B.C.), and on the same day the Persian fleet and a land army met with joint disaster under the shadow of Mount Mycale on the Asiatic mainland, between Ephesus and Miletus. The Persian ships, being in fear of the Greeks, had been drawn up on shore and a wall built about them; but the Greeks disembarked and stormed this enclosure. They then sailed to the Hellespont to destroy what was left of the bridge of boats, so that later the Persian fugitives, retreating from Plataea, had to cross by shipping at the Bosphorus, and did so with difficulty.

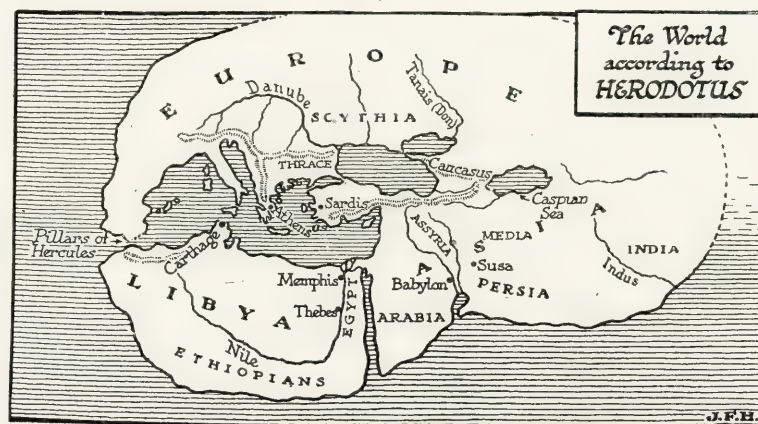
Encouraged by these disasters of the imperial power, the Ionian cities in Asia began for a second time to revolt against the Persians.

With this the ninth book of the *History of Herodotus* comes to an end. He was born about 484 B.C., so that at the time of the battle of Plataea he was a child of five years old. Much of the substance of his story was

gathered by him from actors in, and eye-witnesses of, the great events he relates. The war still dragged on for a long time; the Greeks supported a rebellion against Persian rule in Egypt, and tried unsuccessfully to take Cyprus; it did not end until about 449 B.C. Then the Greek coasts of Asia Minor and the Greek cities in the Black Sea remained generally free, but Cyprus and Egypt continued under Persian rule. Herodotus, who had been born a Persian subject in the Ionian city of Halicarnassus, was five and thirty years old by that time, and he must have taken an early opportunity after this peace of visiting Babylon and Persia. He probably went to Athens, with his *History* ready to recite, about 438 B.C.

The idea of a great union of Greece for aggression against Persia was not altogether strange to Herodotus. Some of his readers suspect him of writing to enforce it. It was certainly in the air at that time. He describes Aristagoras, the son-in-law of Histæus, as showing the Spartans "a tablet of bronze on

which was engraved a map of the whole earth with all the seas and rivers." He makes Aristagoras say: "These Barbarians are not valiant in fight. You, on the other hand, have now attained to the utmost skill in war. They fight with bows and arrows and a short spear; they go into battle wearing trousers and having caps on their heads. You have perfected your weapons and discipline. They are easily to be conquered. Not all the other nations of the world have what they possess: gold, silver, bronze, embroidered garments, beasts and slaves; *all this you might have for yourselves, if you so desired.*"



It was a hundred years before these suggestions bore fruit.

Xerxes was murdered in his palace about 465 B.C., and thereafter Persia made no further attempts at conquest in Europe. We have no such knowledge of the things that were happening in the empire of the Great King as we have of the occurrences in the little states of Central Greece. Greece had suddenly begun to produce literature, and put itself upon record as no other nation had ever done hitherto. After 479 B.C. (Plataea) the spirit seems to have gone out of the government of the Medes and Persians. The empire of the Great King enters upon a period of decay. An Artaxerxes, a second Xerxes, a second Darius, pass across the stage; there are rebellions in Egypt and Syria; the Medes rebel; a second Artaxerxes and a second Cyrus, his brother, fight for the throne. This history is even as the history of Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt in the older times. It is autocracy reverting to its normal state of palace crime, blood-stained magnificence, and



moral squalor. But the last-named struggle produced a Greek masterpiece, for this second Cyrus collected an army of Greek mercenaries and marched into Babylonia, and was there killed at the moment of victory over Artaxerxes II. Thereupon, the Ten Thousand Greeks, left with no one to employ them, made a retreat to the coast again (401 B.C.), and this retreat was immortalized in a book, one of the first of personal war books, the *Anabasis*, by their leader Xenophon.

Murders, revolts, chastisements, disasters, cunning alliances, and base betrayals, and no Herodotus to record them. Such is the texture of Persian history. An Artaxerxes III, covered with blood, flourishes dimly for a time. "Artaxerxes III is said to have been murdered by Bagoas, who places Arses, the youngest of the king's sons, on the throne only to slay him in

turn when he seemed to be contemplating independent action."<sup>1</sup> So it goes on. Beneath the crimes and disorders of the palaces, the life of the city and country ran a similar course.

Justice was fitful and law venal. Wars that were unmeaning catastrophes swept down upon any little gleam of prosperity or decency to which this or that community clambered. Athens, prospering for a time after the Persian repulse, was smitten by the plague, in which Pericles, its greatest ruler, died (428 B.C.). But, as a noteworthy fact amidst these confusions, the Ten Thousand of Xenophon were scattering now among the Greek cities, repeating from their own experience the declaration of Aristagoras that the Persian empire was a rich confusion which it would be very easy to conquer.

<sup>1</sup> Winckler, in Helmolt's *Universal History*.

## XXIII

### GREEK THOUGHT AND LITERATURE<sup>1</sup>

#### § 1

**G**REEK history for the next forty years after Plataea and Mycale is a story of comparative peace and tranquillity. There were wars, but they were not intense wars. For a little while in Athens, for a section of the better sort, there was leisure and opportunity. And by a combination of accidents, and through the character of a small group of people, this leisure and opportunity produced the most remarkable and memorable results. A beautiful literature was produced; the plastic arts flourished, and the foundations of modern science were laid. Then, after an interlude of fifty odd years, the long-smouldering hostility between Athens and Sparta broke out into a fierce and exhausting war, which sapped at last the vitality of this creative movement.

This war is known in history as the Peloponnesian War; it went on for nearly thirty years, and wasted all the power of Greece. At first Athens was in the ascendant, then Sparta.

<sup>1</sup> See in relation to this chapter, Zimmer's *Greek Commonwealth*. A very handy book for the student in this section is Abbott's *Skeleton Outline of Greek History*.

Then arose Thebes, a city not fifty miles from Athens, to overshadow Sparta. Once more Athens flared into importance as the head of a confederation. The story must be told at considerable length or not told at all. It is a story of narrow rivalries and inexplicable hatreds, that would have vanished long ago out of the memories of men, were it not that it is recorded and reflected in a great literature.

Through all this time Persia appears and reappears as the ally first of this league and then of that. About the middle of the fourth century B.C., Greece becomes aware of a new influence in its affairs, that of Philip, King of Macedonia. Macedonia does, indeed, arise in the background of this incurably divided Greece, as the Medes and Persians arose behind the Chaldean Empire. A time comes when the Greek mind turns round, so to speak, from

The time chart, page 209, represents seven centuries. Throughout the rest of this History we shall give a series of time charts on the same scale, ending with 1920 A.D. This chart is on a scale of roughly  $8\frac{1}{2}$  times  $\frac{9}{16}$  that of the time chart on page 111. By this scale that chart would have to be about 4 feet long; the time diagram on page 58, 377 inches; that on page 38, 377 feet; and the diagram of geological time between  $8\frac{1}{2}$  and 85 miles!





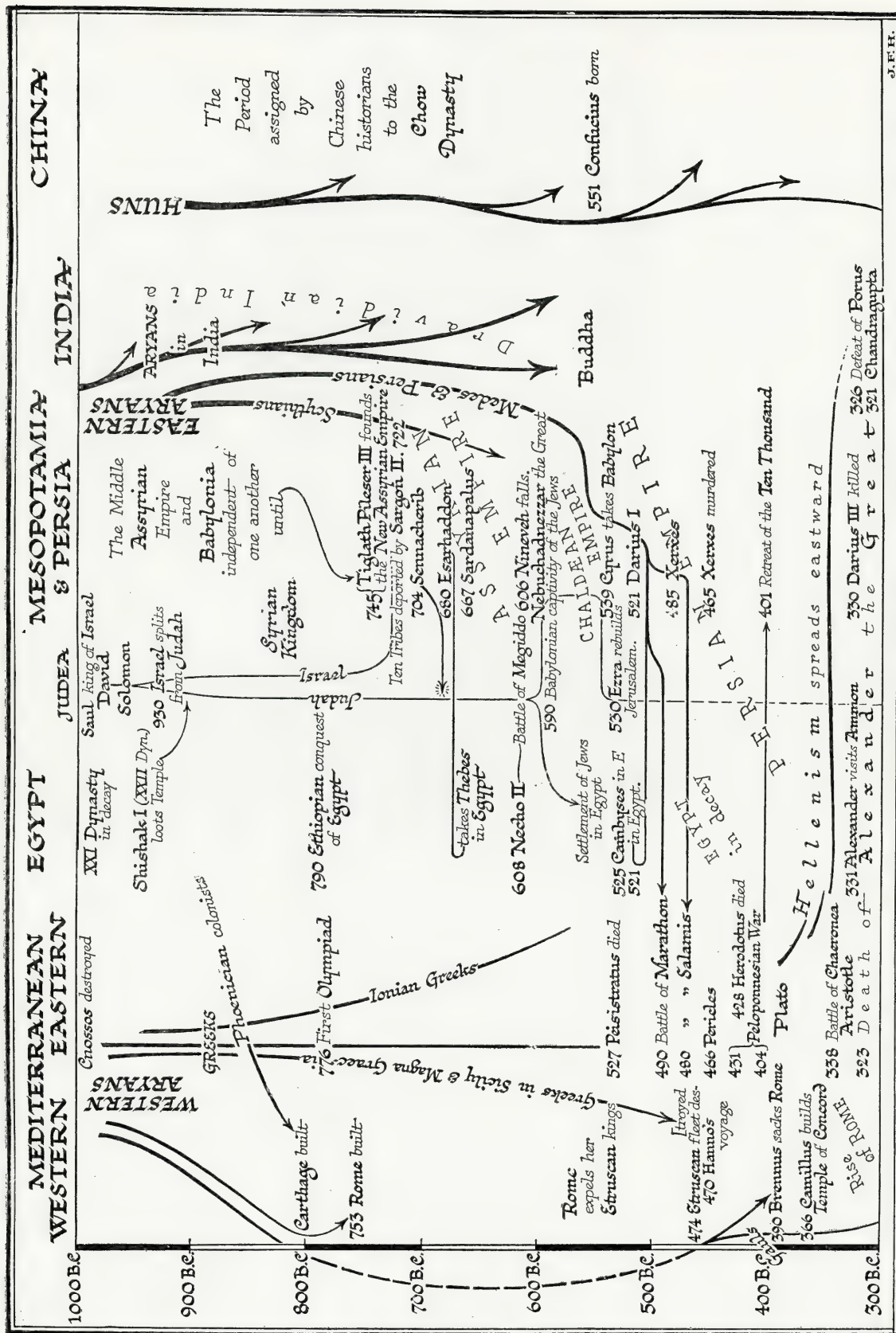
*From a photograph by Alinari.*

THE PARTHENON OF ATHENS SEEN FROM THE PROPYLÆA.









(See footnote on page 208.)



its disputes, and stares in one united dismay at the Macedonian.

Planless and murderous squabbles are still planless and murderous squabbles even though Thucydides tells the story, even though the great beginnings of a new civilization are wrecked by their disorders, and in this general outline we can give no space at all to the particulars of these internecine feuds, to the fights and flights that sent first this Greek city and then that up to the sky in flames. Upon a one-foot globe Greece becomes a speck almost too small to recognize, and in a short history of mankind, all this century and more of dissension between the days of Salamis and Plataea and the rise of King Philip, shrinks to a

little, almost inaudible clash of disputation, to a mere note upon the swift passing of opportunity for nations as for men.

But what does not shrink into insignificance, because it has entered into the intellectual process of all subsequent nations, because it is inseparably a part of our mental foundation, is the literature that Athens produced during such patches and gleams of tranquillity and security as these times afforded her.

Says Professor Gilbert Murray:<sup>1</sup>

"Their outer political history, indeed, like that of all other nations, is filled with war and diplomacy, with cruelty and deceit. It is the inner history, the history of thought and feeling and character, that is so grand. They

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Greek Literature*, by Gilbert Murray (Heinemann, 1911).

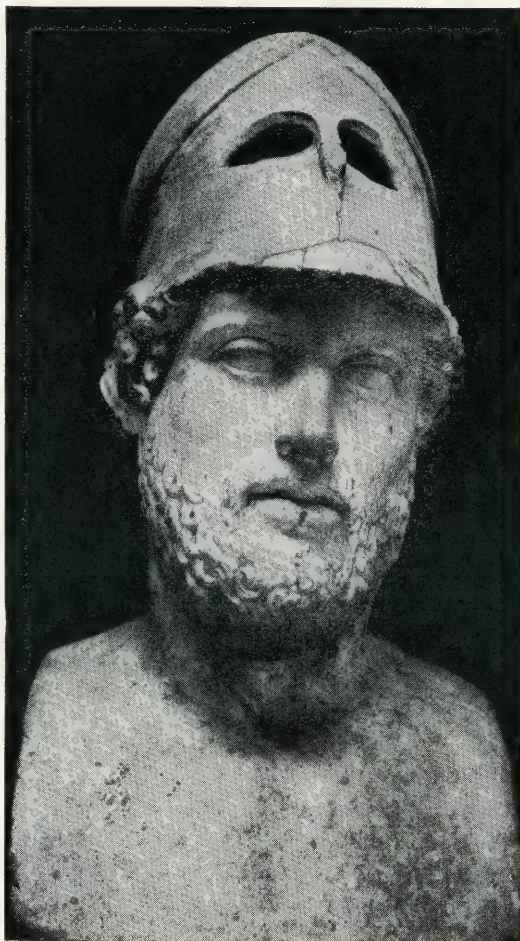


Photo: Mansell.

PERICLES. (BUST FOUND NEAR TIVOLI.)

had some difficulties to contend with which are now almost out of our path. They had practically no experience, but were doing everything for the first time; they were utterly weak in material resources, and their emotions, their '*desires and fears and rages*,' were probably wilder and fierier than ours. Yet they produced the Athens of Pericles and of Plato."

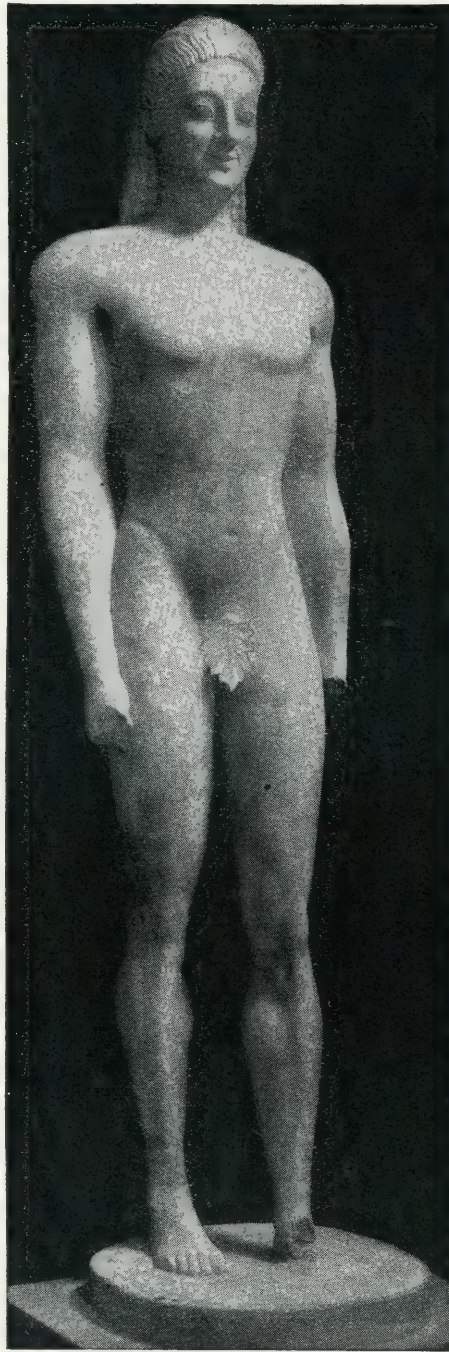
This remarkable outbreak of creative power, which for three and twenty centuries has been to men of intelligence a guiding and inspiring beacon out of the past, flared up after the battles of Marathon and Salamis had made Athens free and fearless, and, without any great excesses of power, predominate in her world.

It was the work of a quite small group of men. A number of her citizens lived for the better part of a generation under conditions which, in all ages, have disposed men to produce good and beautiful work; they were secure, they were free, and they had pride; and they were without that temptation of apparent and unchallenged power which disposes all of us to inflict wrongs upon our fellow men. When political life narrowed down again to the waste and crimes of a fratricidal war with Sparta, there was so broad and well-fed a flame of intellectual activity burning that it lasted through all the windy distresses of this war and beyond the brief lifetime of Alexander the Great, for a period altogether of more than a hundred years after the wars began.

Athens, it must be understood, was by far the largest of all the Greek city democracies.



Flushed with victory and the sense of freedom fairly won, her people did for a time rise towards nobility. Under the guidance of a great demagogue, Pericles, the chief official of the Athenian general assembly, and a politician statesman rather of the calibre of Gladstone or Lincoln in modern history, they were set to the task of rebuilding their city and expanding their commerce. For a time they were capable of following a generous leader generously, and Fate gave them a generous leader. In Pericles there was mingled in the strangest fashion political ability with a real living passion for deep and high and beautiful things. He kept in power for over thirty years. He was a man of extraordinary vigour and liberality of mind. He stamped these qualities upon his time. As Winckler has remarked, the Athenian democracy had for a time "the face of Pericles." He was sustained by what was probably a very great and noble friendship. There was a woman of unusual education, Aspasia, from Miletus, whom he could not marry because of the law that restricted the citizenship of Athens to the home-born, but who was in effect his wife. She played a large part in gathering about him men of unusual gifts. All the great writers of the time knew her, and several have praised her wisdom. Plutarch, it is true, accuses her of instigating a troublesome and dangerous but



*Photo: Alinari.*

ARCHAIC STATUE OF APOLLO (SIXTH CENTURY B.C.) BEFORE THE GREAT PERIOD OF ATHENIAN ART.

finally successful war against Samos, but, as he himself shows later, this was necessitated by the naval hostility of the Samians, which threatened the overseas trade of Athens, upon which all the prosperity of the republic depended.

Men's ambitions are apt to reflect the standards of their intimates. Pericles was content, at any rate, to serve as a leader in Athens rather than to dominate as a tyrant. Alliances were formed under his guidance, new colonies and trading stations were established from Italy to the Black Sea; and the treasures of the league at Delos were brought to Athens. Convinced of his security from Persia, Pericles spent the war hoard of the allies upon the beautification of his city. This was an unrighteous thing to do by our modern standards, but it was not a base or greedy thing to do. Athens had accomplished the work of the Delian League, and is not the labourer worthy of his hire? This sequestration made a time of exceptional opportunity for architects and artists. The Parthenon of Athens, whose ruins are still a thing of beauty, was but the crown set upon the clustering beauty of the Athens

Pericles rebuilt. Such sculptures as those of Phidias, Myron, and Polyclitus that still survive, witness to the artistic quality of the time.

The reader must bear in mind that illuminating remark of Winckler's, which says that this



renascent Athens bore for a time the face of Pericles. It was the peculiar genius of this man and of his atmosphere that let loose the genius of men about him, and attracted men of great intellectual vigour to Athens. Athens wore his face for a time as one wears a mask, and then became restless and desired to put him aside. There was very little that was great and generous

about the common Athenian. We have told of the spirit of one sample voter for the ostracism of Aristides, and Lloyd (in his *Age of Pericles*) declares that the Athenians would not suffer the name of Miltiades to be mentioned in connection with the battle of Marathon. The sturdy self-respect of the common voters revolted presently against the beautiful buildings rising about them; against the favours shown to such sculptors as Phidias over popular worthies in the same line of business; against the donations made to a mere foreigner like Herodotus of Halicarnassus; against the insulting preference of Pericles for the company and conversation of a Milesian woman. The public life of Pericles was conspicuously orderly, and that presently set the man in the street thinking that his private life must be very corrupt. One gathers that Pericles was "superior" in his demeanour; he betrayed at times a contempt for the citizens he served.

"Pericles acquired not only an elevation of sentiment, and a loftiness and purity of style far removed from the low expression of the vulgar, but likewise a gravity of countenance which relaxed not into laughter, a firm and even tone of voice, an easy deportment, and a decency of dress which no vehemence of speaking ever put into disorder. These things, and others of a like nature, excited admiration in all that saw him. Such was his conduct, when a vile and abandoned fellow loaded him a whole day with reproaches and abuse; he bore it with patience and silence, and continued in public for the despatch of some urgent affairs. In the evening he walked softly home, this impudent wretch following, and insulting him all the way with the most scurrilous language. And as it was dark when he came to his own door, he ordered one of his servants to take a torch and light the man home. The poet Ion, however, says he was proud and supercilious in conversation, and that there was a great deal of vanity and contempt of others mixed with his dignity of manner. . . . He appeared not in the streets except when he went to the forum or the senate house. He declined the invitations of his friends, and all social entertainments and recreations; insomuch that in the whole time of his administration, which was a considerable length, he never went to sup with any of his friends but

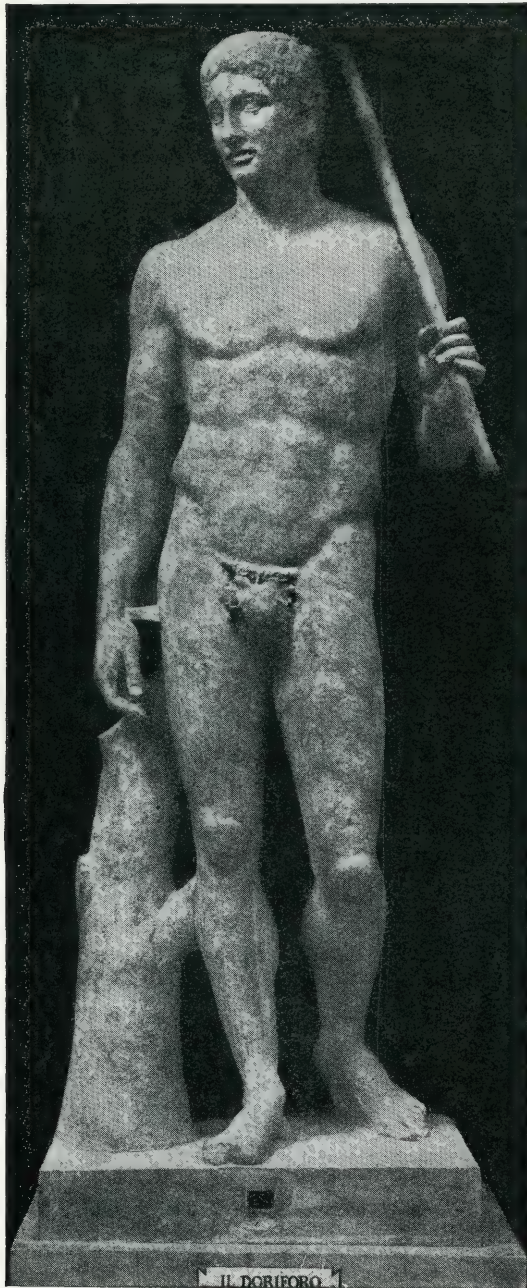


Photo: Anderson.

THE DORYPHORUS—SPEAR-BEARER—OF POLYKLETOS.



once, which was at the marriage of his nephew Eurypotemus, and he staid there only until the ceremony of libation was ended. He considered that the freedom of entertainments takes away all distinction of office, and that dignity is but little consistent with familiarity. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

There was as yet no gutter journalism to tell the world of the vileness of the conspicuous and successful; but the common man, a little out of conceit with himself, found much consolation in the art of comedy, which flourished exceedingly. The writers of comedy satisfied that almost universal craving for the depreciation of those whose apparent excellence offends our self-love. They threw dirt steadily and industriously at Pericles and his friends. Pericles was portrayed in a helmet; a helmet became him, and it is to be feared he knew as much. This led to much joy and mirth over the pleasant suggestion of a frightfully distorted head, an onion head. The "goings on" of Aspasia were of course a fruitful vineyard for the inventions of the street. . . .

Dreaming souls, weary of the vulgarities of our time, have desired to be transferred to the sublime Age of Pericles. But, plumped down into that Athens, they would have found themselves in very much the atmosphere of the lower sort of contemporary music-hall, very much in the vein of our popular newspapers; the same hot blast of braying libel, foul imputation, greedy "patriotism," and general baseness would have blown upon them, the "modern note" would have pursued them. As the memories of Platæa and Salamis faded and the new buildings grew familiar, Pericles and the pride of Athens became more and more offensive to the homely humour of the crowd. He was never ostracized—his prestige with the quieter citizens saved him from that; but he was attacked with increasing boldness and steadfastness. He lived and died a poor man; he was perhaps the most honest of demagogues; but this did not save him from an abortive prosecution for peculation. Defeated in that, his enemies resorted to a more devious method; they began to lop away his friends.

Religious intolerance and moral accusations are the natural weapons of the envious against the leaders of men. His friend Damon was

<sup>1</sup> *Plutarch*.

ostracized. Phidias was attacked for impiety. On the shield of the great statue of the goddess Athenè, Phidias had dared to put, among the combatants in a fight between Greeks and Amazons, portraits of Pericles and himself. Phidias died in prison. Anaxagoras, a stranger welcomed to Athens by Pericles—when there were plenty of honest fellows already there

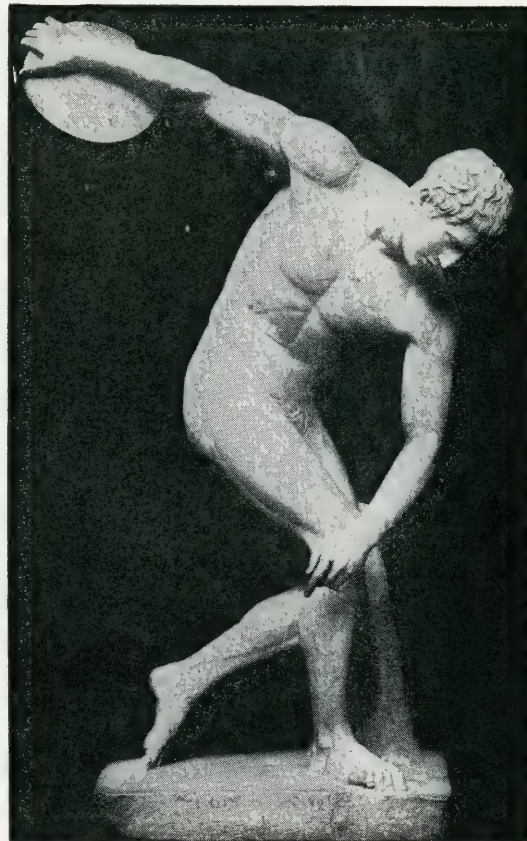


Photo: Mansell.

COPY OF MYRON'S DISCOBOLUS.

quite willing to satisfy any reasonable curiosities—was saying the strangest things about the sun and stars, and hinting not obscurely that there were no gods, but only one animating spirit (*nous*) in the world.<sup>2</sup> The comedy writers suddenly found they had deep religious feelings that could be profoundly and even dangerously shocked, and Anaxagoras fled the threat of a prosecution. Then came the turn of Aspasia. Athens seemed bent upon deporting her, and Pericles was torn between the woman who was

<sup>2</sup> For an account of his views, see Burnet's *Greek Philosophy*.



the soul of his life and the ungracious city he had saved, defended, and made more beautiful and unforgettable than any other city in history. He stood up to defend Aspasia, he was seized by a storm of very human emotion, and as he spoke he wept—a gleeful thing for the rabble. His tears saved Aspasia for a time.

The Athenians were content to humiliate Pericles, but he had served them so long that they were indisposed to do without him. He had been their leader now for a third of a century.

In 431 B.C. came the war with Sparta. Plutarch accuses Pericles of bringing it on, because he felt his popularity waned so fast that a war was needed to make him indispensable.

"And as he himself was become obnoxious to the people upon Phidias's account, and was afraid of being called in question for it, he urged on the war, which as yet was uncertain, and blew up that flame which till then was stifled and suppressed. By this means he hoped to obviate the accusations that threatened him, and to mitigate the rage of envy, because such was his dignity and power, that in all important affairs, and in every great danger, the republic could place its confidence in him alone."

But the war was a slow and dangerous war, and the Athenian people were impatient. A



Photo: Anderson.

VENUS OF PRAXITELES.

certain Cleon arose, ambitious to oust Pericles from his leadership. There was a great clamour for a swift ending of the war. Cleon set out to be "the man who won the war." The popular poets got to work in this fashion:

"Thou king of satyrs . . .  
why boast thy  
prowess,  
Yet shudder at the  
sound of sharpened  
swords,  
Spite of the flaming  
Cleon?"

An expedition under the leadership of Pericles was unsuccessful, and Cleon seized the opportunity for a prosecution. Pericles was suspended from his command and fined. The story goes that his eldest son—this was not the son of Aspasia, but of a former wife—turned against him, and pursued him with vile and incredible accusations. This young man was carried off by the plague. Then the sister of Pericles died, and then his last legitimate son. When, after the fashion of the time, he put the

funeral garlands on the boy he wept aloud. Presently he himself took the contagion and died (428 B.C.).

The salient facts of this brief summary will serve to show how discordant Pericles was with the normal life of his time and city. This intellectual and artistic outbreak in Athens was no doubt favoured by the conditions of the time, but it was also due in part to the appearance



of some very unusual men. It was not a general movement; it was the movement of a small group of people exceptionally placed and gifted.

## § 2

Another leading figure in this Athenian movement, a figure still more out of harmony with the life around him, and quite as much an original source and stimulant of the enduring greatness of his age, was a man called Socrates, the son of a stone-mason. He was born about sixteen years later than Herodotus, and he was beginning to be heard of about the time when Pericles died. He himself wrote nothing, but it was his custom to talk in public places. There was in those days a great searching for wisdom going on; there was a various multitude of teachers called sophists who reasoned upon truth, beauty, and right living, and instructed the developing curiosities and imaginations of youth. This was so because there were no great priestly schools in Greece. And into these discussions this man came, a clumsy and slovenly figure, barefooted, gathering about him a band of admirers and disciples.

His method was profoundly sceptical; he believed that the only possible virtue was true knowledge; he would tolerate no belief, no hope that could not pass the ultimate acid test. For himself this meant virtue, but for many of his weaker followers it meant the loss of beliefs and moral habits that would have restrained their impulses. These weaklings became self-excusing, self-indulging scoundrels. Among his young associates were Plato, who afterwards immortalized his method in a series of philosophical dialogues, and founded the philosophical school of the Academy, which lasted nine hundred years, Xenophon, of the Ten Thousand, who described his death, and Isocrates, one of the wisest of Greek political thinkers; but there were also Critias, who, when Athens was utterly defeated by Sparta, was leader among the Thirty Tyrants appointed by the Spartans to keep the crushed city under;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "But it was not only against the lives, properties, and liberties of Athenian citizens that the Thirty made war. They were not less solicitous to extinguish the intellectual force and education of the city, a project so perfectly in harmony both with the sentiment and

Charmides, who was killed beside Critias when the Thirty were overthrown; and Alcibiades, a brilliant and complex traitor, who did much to lead Athens into the disastrous expedition against Syracuse which destroyed her strength, who betrayed her to the Spartans, and who was at last assassinated while on his way to the Persian court to contrive mischief against Greece. These latter pupils were not the only young men of promise whose vulgar faith and



Photo: Mansell.

ANCIENT COPY FROM SHIELD OF THE ATHENS OF THE PARTHENON BY PHIDIAS. BATTLE OF GREEKS AND AMAZONS.

Among the Greeks is Phidias as a bald-headed old man and Pericles with his arm across his face.

patriotism Socrates destroyed to leave nothing in its place. His most inveterate enemy was a certain Anytus, whose son, a devoted disciple of Socrates, had become a hopeless drunkard.

practice of Sparta, that they counted on the support of their foreign allies. Among the ordinances which they promulgated was one, expressly forbidding any one 'to teach the art of words.' The edict of the Thirty was, in fact, a general suppression of the higher class of teachers or professors, above the rank of the elementary (teacher of letters or) grammarist. If such an edict could have been maintained in force for a generation, combined with the other mandates of the Thirty—the city out of which Sophocles and Euripides had just died, and in which Plato and Isocrates were in vigorous age, would have been degraded to the intellectual level of the meanest community in Greece. It was not uncommon for a Grecian despot to suppress all those assemblies wherein youths came together for the purpose of common training, either intellectual or gymnastic, as well as the public banquets and clubs or associations, as being dangerous to his authority, tending to elevation of courage, and to a consciousness of political rights among the citizens."—Grote's *History of Greece*.



Through Anytus it was that Socrates was at last prosecuted for "corrupting" the youth of Athens, and condemned to death by drinking a poisonous draught made from hemlock (399 B.C.).

His death is described with great beauty in the dialogue of Plato called by the name of *Phædo*.

### § 3

The preceding section raised an interesting discussion between Professor Gilbert Murray and the writer upon the character and quality of the common Athenian citizen. Professor Murray thought several phrases used by the writer harsh and unjust. But what he had to say was so interesting and informing, and the writer was so entirely in agreement with his spirit, that it seemed better, instead of modifying what has been written in § 1, to leave that as it stood and to supplement it by quoting Professor Murray. He objected to the parallelism with a twentieth-century crowd. "What I want you to do," he wrote, "is to take them at the level of the people round them and before them and see how they differ. For example, the first thing that strikes one is that they use all their powers for a different purpose than most peoples:

for intellectual and artistic things. No more enormous works here to glorify divine kings; no private splendour, no luxury, but a wonderful output of art, poetry, philosophy, and—within limits—science. Compare them with Rome.

"In the matter of slavery: all nations had slaves; some treated them very cruelly, some with moderate cruelty. The Greeks alone argued whether it was right to have them—and 'cranks' occasionally proposed emancipation. You get strong testimony, sometimes indignant testimony, that the Athenians were too soft altogether in their treatment of slaves. As soon as you get to Carthaginian or Roman history you get appalling cruelty (the 6,000 crucified by Crassus, the gladiatorial games, the habitual leg-breaking of slaves, etc.); such things seem never to have occurred in Greece. As soon as you get to Alexander you get, of course, the Oriental despotic touch—fantastic vanity and cruelty; and at length the recurrence of human sacrifice.

"The greatness of Greece comes out only in the art and literature and thought; not in the political and social history—except in dim flashes. By all means emphasize clearly to start with that the Greeks of, say, the ninth century, were practically savages, and those of



Photo: Sebah.

THE PLATFORM ON THE ATHENIAN PLACE OF ASSEMBLY, FROM WHICH PERICLES MUST HAVE SPOKEN.



even the sixth and in places right on to the fifth and fourth were in many things on the 'Lower Cultures' level. Clothes like Polynesians; tools very poor; religion . . . fragments of the Polynesian all about, when you got outside the educated Attic world. But the *characteristic* is that, on this very low level, you have extraordinary flashes of very high inspiration, as the poetry and art and philosophy witness. Also, an actual achievement in social life—what one calls 'Hellenism,' *i.e.*, republicanism, simplicity of life, so-

briety of thought, almost complete abolition of torture, mutilation, etc., and an amazing emancipation of the individual and of the human intellect. It is impossible to speak, really, of the 'Greek view' of anything. Because all the different views are put forward and represented: polytheism, monotheism, atheism; pro-slavery, anti-slavery; duty to animals, no duty to animals; democracy, monarchy, aristocracy. The characteristic is that *human thought got free*. (Not absolutely, of course; only to an amazing extent.) This emancipation was paid for by all sorts of instability; awful political instability, because stability in such things is produced exactly by the opposite—by long firm tradition and cohesiveness.

"It is not fair to say I idealize the Athenian mob; see, for example, my *Euripides and his Age*. But I don't think it was like our music-hall mob. It was much more artistic, much more intellectual and yet more primitive, more indecent but less lascivious; more capable of atrocious misconduct; also probably more capable of idealism. But we don't really know much about the crowd. It is only a hostile average-sensual-man background against which

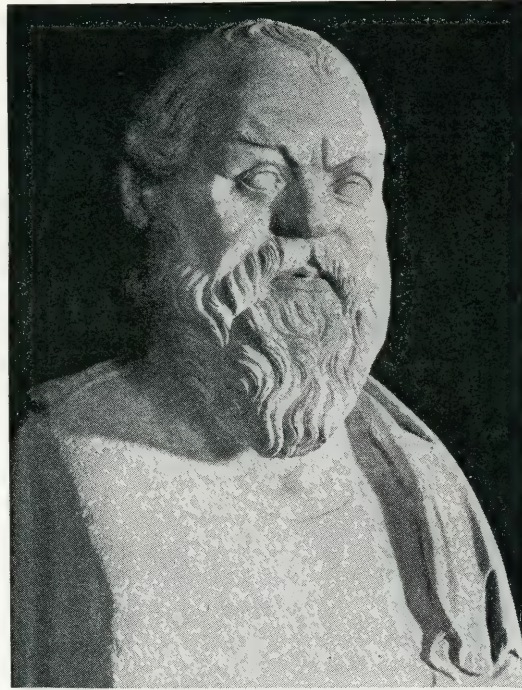


Photo: Alinari.

SOCRATES. (BUST IN THE VATICAN.)

the philosophers and poets stand out. There was no 'city mob,' as in Rome. They were nearly all small farmers or craftsmen. I can't help thinking that their badness was more like the faults of a superior South Sea Islander than like the viler side of the 'crowd' to-day."

#### § 4

The most characteristic feature of the Greek opening Tragedy and years of Comedy. this brilliant century and a half (475 to 325 B.C.) of Greek intellectual life was the appearance of the great tragedies.

Before the age of Pericles the main literature of the Greek peoples had been their epic poetry, of which we have already said something in our account of the earlier nomadic Aryan life. It was made up of songs of free adventure, aristocratic and valiant in spirit. The main Greek epics were reduced to writing, and the text of the chief ones put in its present order in the time of the tyrant Peisistratus (*i.e.*, immediately before the first Persian wars). Chanted originally to the chiefs and leading men in hall, they were now recited at the public festivals. In addition, there were also poems of more homely character, love songs, war lyrics, and the like.

A third stream of poetry also ran into the Greek tradition, perhaps not of Aryan origin at all, but preserving the religious ideas of the dark whites whom the Greeks had conquered. These were religious chants and hymns associated with the secret religious practices of the worship of Demeter, the earth goddess, and of Orpheus and Dionysus. They are mixed up with ideas of self-abasement, self-mutilation, and the like, that were altogether foreign to the healthy directness of the hardy barbarians from the north. These ideas were creeping out from



their hiding-places, and expressing themselves in Greek in Athens during this period in the Orphic religious poetry. It seems probable that in the Athenian population among all the Greek cities the pre-Aryan strain was unusually strong. This dark strain was subtle, artistic, creative—Cnossos witnesses to that; but it had no great courage of the mind; it was afraid of the stars and of life. Whenever that strain is



Photo: Alinari.

HEAD OF THE HERMES OF PRAXITELES  
(Fine example of Greek ideal type.)

found in any race, there is to be found also thoughts and legends of sacrificial murders.

And perhaps also indigenous to the Greek soil, rooted deeply there in the time of the world-wide ancient heliolithic culture, were religious dances. Such dances we can trace from the Atlantic to Peru. There is a drawing in a Spanish cave at Cogul, near the Ebro, which is supposed to represent a later palæolithic ritual dance. There is little evidence of the primitive Aryans engaging in religious dances. But running

through the rural life of Greece was the tradition of a dressing-up and a dancing and chanting associated with the worship of another God, who is killed and lives again as a part of the ceremonies, the God Dionysus. After the coming of the Aryans into Grèce, the vocal element became stronger in these proceedings, and thrust into the dance came a recitation. There was first one reciter, then two, and then

three, and the rest of the company became the chorus to the declamations of these principal actors. Out of the public performance at festivals and anniversaries of these choir songs or dithyrambs with one actor grew the great art of tragedy with three and more. Side by side with tragedy, comedy developed from another and merrier series of dressings-up and singing. Here we can but name those who were supreme in these arts who flourished in the days of Pericles, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the masters of tragedy, and Aristophanes, the writer of comedies. We can say nothing of the splendour and beauty of the former, nor of the fantastic invention and wit of the latter. Æschylus won his first prize for tragedy in the year that Herodotus was born (484 B.C.); Sophocles came some eighteen years later; Euripides was four years old when Æschylus was beginning his career. The mockery of Aristophanes broke out (427 B.C.) only when the days of great tragedy and sculpture and building were drawing to a close.

## § 5

The influence of Socrates also began to bear fruit after the days of Pericles and Aspasia.

This old questioner, at whose touch faith, speculation, and illusion shrivelled together, was the centre of a group of young men who lived through and after the years of the Peloponnesian War. Of all the young men, one stands out as the greatest of them all, Plato. He was born 427 B.C., the year of the first performance of

Plato and  
the Academy.



the work of Aristophanes, and he lived for eighty years.

In mental temperament Plato was of an altogether different type from the older man. He was a most artistic and delicate writer, and Socrates could write nothing consecutive. He cared for beautiful things and Socrates despised them. He was supremely concerned with the ordering of public affairs and the scheming of happier human relationships, while Socrates, heedless of heat and cold and the opinion of his fellow creatures, concentrated his mind upon a serene disillusionment. Life, said Socrates, was deception; only the Soul lived. Plato had a very great affection for this rugged old teacher, he found his method of the utmost value in disentangling and cleaning up opinions, and he made him the central figure of his immortal dialogues; but his own thoughts and disposition turned him altogether away from the sceptical attitude. In many of the dialogues the voice is the voice of Socrates, but the thought is the thought of Plato. Plato was living in a time of doubt and questioning about all human relationships. In the great days of Pericles, before 450 B.C., there seems to have been a complete satisfaction in Athens with social and

political institutions. Then there seemed no reason for questioning. Men felt free; the community prospered; one suffered chiefly from jealousy. The History of Herodotus displays little or no dissatisfaction with Athenian political institutions.

But Plato, who was born about the time Herodotus died, and who grew up in the atmosphere of a disastrous war and great social distress and confusion, was from the first face to face with human discord and the misfit of human institutions. To that challenge his mind responded. One of his earlier works and his latest are bold and penetrating discussions of the possible betterment of social relations. Socrates had taught him to take nothing for granted, not even the common relations of husband and wife or parent and child. His *Republic*, the first of all Utopian books, is a young man's dream of a city in which human life is arranged according to a novel and a better plan; his last unfinished work, the *Laws*, is a discussion of the regulation of another such Utopia. There is much in Plato at which we cannot even glance here, but it is a landmark in this history, it is a new thing in the development of mankind, this appearance of the idea of wilfully and com-

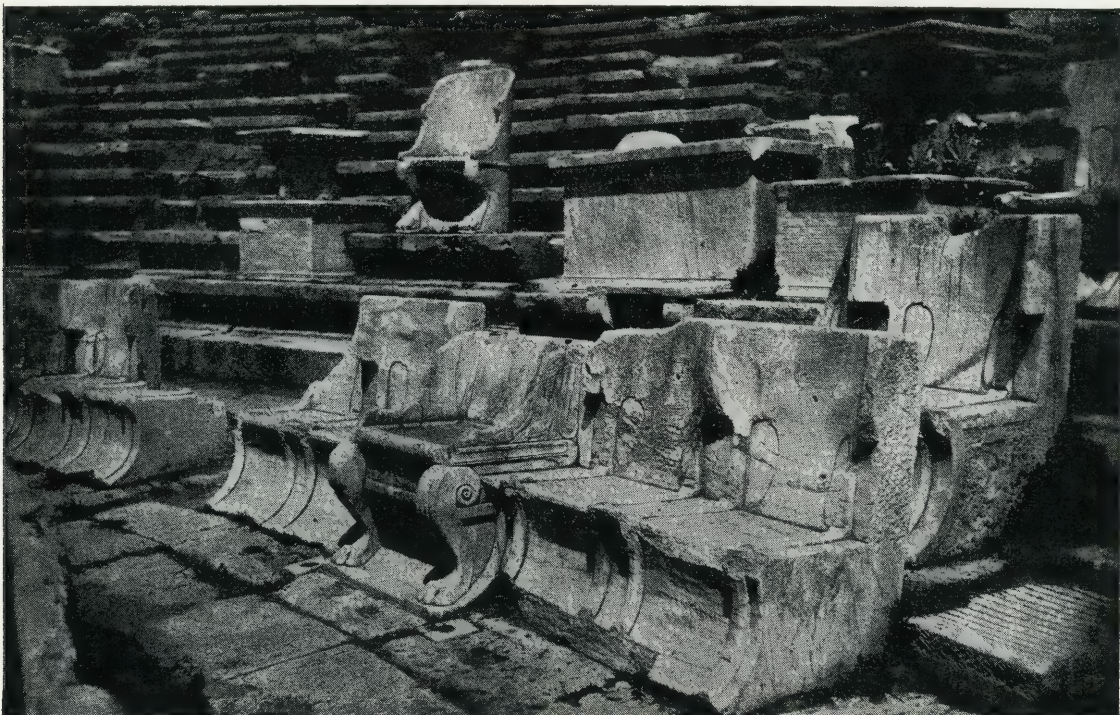


Photo: Bonfils.

SEATS IN THE THEATRE OF DIONYSUS, ATHENS.



pletely recasting human conditions. So far mankind has been living by tradition under the fear of the gods. Here is a man who says boldly to our race, and as if it were a quite reasonable and natural thing to say, "Take hold of your lives. Most of these things that distress you, you can avoid; most of these



Photo: Anderson.

PLATO. (BUST FROM NAPLES MUSEUM). IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS WRONGLY ASCRIBED TO PLATO, AND THAT IT REPRESENTS THE INDIAN BACCHUS.

things that dominate you, you can overthrow. You can do as you will with them."

One other thing besides the conflicts of the time perhaps stimulated the mind of Plato in this direction. In the days of Pericles Athens had founded many settlements overseas, and the setting up of these settlements had familiarized men with the idea that a community need not grow, it could also be made.

Closely associated with Plato was a younger man, who later also maintained a school in Athens and lived to an even greater age. This was Isocrates. He was what we should call a publicist, a writer rather than an orator, and his peculiar work was to develop the idea of Herodotus, the idea of a unification of Greece against the Persian Empire, as a remedy for the baseness and confusion of her politics and the waste and destruction of her internecine wars. His political horizon was in some respects broader than Plato's, and in his later years he

looked towards monarchy, and particularly towards the Macedonian monarchy of Philip, as a more unifying and broadening method of government than city democracy. The same drift to monarchist ideas had occurred in the case of that Xenophon whose *Anabasis* we have already mentioned. In his old age this retired mercenary wrote the *Cyropædia*, a "vindication both theoretically and practically of absolute monarchy as shown in the organization of the Persian Empire."<sup>1</sup>

## § 6

Plato taught in the Academy. To him in his old age came a certain good-looking youngster from Stagira in Macedonia, Aristotle, who was the son of the Macedonian king's physician, and a man with a very different type of mind from that of the great Athenian. He was naturally sceptical of the imaginative will, and with a great respect for and comprehension of established fact. Later on, after Plato was dead, he set up a school at the Lyceum in Athens and taught, criticizing Plato and Socrates with a certain hardness. When he taught, the shadow of Alexander the Great lay across the freedom of Greece, and he favoured slavery and constitutional kings. He had previously been the tutor of Alexander for several years at the court of Philip of Macedon.<sup>2</sup> Intelligent men were losing heart in those days, their faith in the power of men to make their own conditions of life was fading. There were no more Utopias. The rush of events was manifestly too powerful for such organized effort as was then practicable between men of fine intelligence. It was possible to think of recasting human society when human society was a little city of a few thousand citizens, but what was happening about them was something cataclysmal; it was the political recasting of the whole known world, of the affairs of what even then must have amounted to something between fifty and a hundred million people. It was recasting upon a scale no human mind was yet equipped to grasp. It drove thought back upon the idea of a vast and

<sup>1</sup> Mahaffy.

<sup>2</sup> There is not a single sentence in praise of Alexander, no dedication, no compliments, in all Aristotle. On the other hand, he never mentions Demosthenes nor quotes him in the *Rhetoric*.—G. M.



implacable Fate. It made men snatch at whatever looked stable and unifying. Monarchy, for instance, for all its manifest vices, was a conceivable government for millions; it had, to a certain extent, *worked*; it imposed a ruling will where it would seem that a collective will was impossible. This change of the general intellectual mood harmonized with Aristotle's natural respect for existing fact. If, on the one hand, it made him approve of monarchy and slavery and the subjection of women as reasonable institutions, on the other hand it made him eager to understand fact and to get some orderly knowledge of these realities of nature and human nature that were now so manifestly triumphant over the creative dreams of the preceding generation. He is terribly sane and luminous, and terribly wanting in self-sacrificial enthusiasm. He questions Plato when Plato would exile poets from his Utopia, for poetry is a power; he directs his energy along a line diametrically opposed to Socrates' depreciation of Anaxagoras. He anticipates Bacon and the modern scientific movement in his realization of the importance of ordered knowledge. He set himself to the task of gathering together and setting down knowledge. He was the first natural historian. Other men before him had speculated about the nature of things, but he, with every young man he could win over to the task, set himself to classify and compare things. Plato says in effect: "Let us take hold of life and remodel it"; this soberer successor: "Let us first know more of life and meanwhile serve the king." It was not so much a contradiction as an immense qualification of the master.

The peculiar relation of Aristotle to Alexander the Great enabled him to procure means for his work such as were not available again for scientific inquiry for long ages. He could command hundreds of talents (a talent = about £240) for his expenses. At one time he had at his disposal a thousand men scattered throughout Asia and Greece, collecting matter for his natural history.<sup>1 2</sup> They were, of course, very

untrained observers, collectors of stories rather than observers; but nothing of the kind had ever been attempted, had even been thought of, so far as we know, before his time. Political and natural science were both attempted. The students of the Lyceum under his direction made an analysis of 158 political constitutions. . . .

This was the first gleam of organized science in the world. The early death of Alexander, and the breaking up of his empire almost before it had begun, put an end to endowments on this scale for 2,000 years. Only in Egypt at the Alexandria Museum did any scientific research continue, and that only for a few generations. Fifty years after Aristotle's death the Lyceum had already dwindled to insignificance.

### § 7

The general drift of thought in the concluding years of the fourth century B.C. was not with Aristotle, nor towards the laborious and necessary accumulation of ordered knowledge. It is possible that without his endowments from the king he would have made but a small figure in intellectual history. Through them he was able to give his splendid intelligence substance and effect. The ordinary man prefers easy ways so long as they may be followed, and is almost wilfully heedless whether they end at last in a cul-de-sac. Finding the stream of events too powerful to control at once, the generality of philosophical teachers drifted in those days from the scheming of model cities and the planning of new ways of living into the elaboration of beautiful and consoling systems of evasion.

Perhaps that is putting things coarsely and unjustly. But let Professor Gilbert Murray speak upon this matter.<sup>3</sup>

"The Cynics cared only for virtue and the relation of the soul to God; the world and its learning and its honours were as dross to them. The Stoics and Epicureans, so far apart at first sight, were very similar in their ultimate aim. What they really cared about was ethics—the practical question how a man should order his life. Both, indeed, gave themselves to some science—the Epicureans to physics, the Stoics

<sup>1</sup> Wheeler.

<sup>2</sup> Bauer, in *Vom Griechentum zum Christentum*, says that Alexander sent a mission of exploration to Abyssinia to enable Aristotle to settle the question of the cause of the Nile inundations (melting of mountain snows), and that he also had tropical flora and other material collected for him.—E. B.

<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Greek Literature*.



to logic and rhetoric—but only as a means to an end. The Stoic tried to win men's hearts and convictions by sheer subtlety of abstract argument and dazzling sublimity of thought and expression. The Epicurean was determined to make Humanity go its way without cringing to capricious gods and without sacrificing Free-Will. He condensed his gospel into four maxims: "God is not to be feared; Death cannot be felt; the Good can be won; all that we dread can be borne and conquered."

And meanwhile the stream of events flowed on, with a reciprocal indifference to philosophy.

### § 8

If the Greek classics are to be read with any benefit by modern men, they must be read as the work of men like ourselves. **The Quality and Limitations of Greek Thought.** Regard must be had to their traditions, their opportunities, and their limitations. There is a disposition to exaggeration in all human admiration; men will treat the rough notes of Thucydides or Plato for work they never put in order as miracles of style, and the errors of their transcribers as hints of unfathomable mysteries; most of our classical texts are very much mangled, and all were originally the work of human beings in difficulties, living in a time of such darkness and narrowness of outlook as makes our own time by comparison a time of dazzling illumination. What we shall lose in reverence by this familiar treatment, we shall gain in sympathy for that group of troubled, uncertain, and very modern minds. The Athenian writers were, indeed, the first of modern men. They were discussing questions that we still discuss; they began to struggle with the great problems that confront us to-day. Their writings are our dawn.

They began an inquiry, and they arrived at no solutions. We cannot pretend to-day that we have arrived at solutions to most of the questions they asked. The mind of the Hebrews, as we have already shown, awoke suddenly to the endless miseries and disorders of life, saw that these miseries and disorders were largely due to the lawless acts of men, and concluded that salvation could come only through subduing ourselves to the service of the one God who rules heaven and earth. The Greek, rising to the same perception, was not prepared with

the same idea of a patriarchal deity; he lived in a world in which there was not God but the gods; if perhaps he felt that the gods themselves were limited, then he thought of Fate behind them, cold and impersonal. So he put his problem in the form of an enquiry as to what was right living, without any definite correlation of the right-living man with the will of God. . . . To us, looking at the matter from a standpoint purely historical, the common problem can now be presented in a form that, for the purposes of history, covers both the Hebrew and Greek way of putting it. We have seen mankind rising out of the unconsciousness of animals to a continuing racial self-consciousness, realizing the unhappiness of its wild diversity of aims, realizing the inevitable tragedy of individual self-seeking, and feeling their way blindly towards some linking and subordinating idea to save them from the pains and accidents of mere individuality. The gods, the god-king, the idea of the tribe, the idea of the city; here are ideas that have claimed and held for a time the devotion of men, ideas in which they have a little lost their individual selves and escaped to the realization of a life larger and more enduring. Yet, as their wars and disasters prove, none of these greater ideas were yet great enough. The gods failed to protect, the tribe proved itself vile and cruel, the city ostracized one's best and truest friends, the god-king made a beast of himself. . . .

As we read over the speculative literature of this great period of the Greeks, we realize three barriers set about the Greek mind, from which it rarely escapes, but from which we now perhaps are escaping.

The first of these limitations is the obsession of the Greek mind by the idea of the city as the ultimate state. . In a world in which empire had followed empire, each greater than its predecessor, in a world through which men and ideas drive ever more loosely and freely, in a world visibly unifying even then, the Greeks, because of their peculiar physical and political circumstances, were still dreaming impossibly of a compact little city state, impervious to outer influences, valiantly secure against the whole world. Plato's estimate of the number of citizens in a perfect state varied between 1,000 (the *Republic*) and 5,040 (the *Laws*)



citizens.<sup>1</sup> This state was to go to war and hold its own against other cities of the same size. And this was not a couple of generations after the hosts of Xerxes had crossed the Hellespont!

Perhaps these Greeks thought the day of world empires had passed for ever, whereas it was only beginning. At the utmost their minds reached out to alliances and leagues.

There must have been men at the court of Artaxerxes thinking far away beyond these little ideas of the rocky creek, the island, and the mountain-encircled valley. But the need for unification against the greater powers that moved outside the Greek-speaking world, the Greek mind disregarded wilfully. These outsiders were barbarians, not to be needlessly thought about; they were barred out now from Greece for ever. One took Persian money; everybody took Persian money; what did it matter? Or one enlisted for a time in their armies (as Xenophon did) and hoped for his luck with a rich prisoner. Athens took

sides in Egyptian affairs, and carried on minor wars with Persia, but there was no conception of a common policy or a common future for Greece. . . . Until at last a voice in Athens began to shout "Macedonia!" to clamour like

<sup>1</sup> "For the proper administration of justice, and for the distribution of authority, it is necessary that the citizens be acquainted with each other's characters, so that, where this cannot be, much mischief ensues, both in the use of authority and in the administration of justice; for it is not just to decide arbitrarily, as must be the case with excessive population," Aristotle's *Politics*, quoted by Wheeler, who adds, "Aristotle comes to the conclusion that the natural 'limit to the size of the state must be found in the capability of being easily taken in at a glance.'" But Murray notes that the word *Eusunopton* means also "capable of being comprehended as a unity"—a very different and wider idea.

a watch-dog, "Macedonia!" This was the voice of the orator and demagogue, Demosthenes; hurling warnings and threats and denunciations at King Philip of Macedon, who had learnt his politics not only from Plato and Aristotle, but also from Isocrates and Xenophon, and from Babylon and Susa, and who was preparing quietly, ably, and steadfastly to dominate all Greece, and through Greece to conquer the known world. . . .

There was a second thing that cramped the Greek mind, the institution of domestic slavery. Slavery was implicit in Greek life; men could conceive of neither comfort nor dignity without it. But slavery shuts off one's sympathy not only from a class of one's fellow subjects; it puts the slave-owner into a class and organization against all stranger men. One is of an elect tribe. Plato, carried by his clear reason and the noble sanity of his spirit beyond the things of the present, would have abolished slavery; much popular feeling and the New

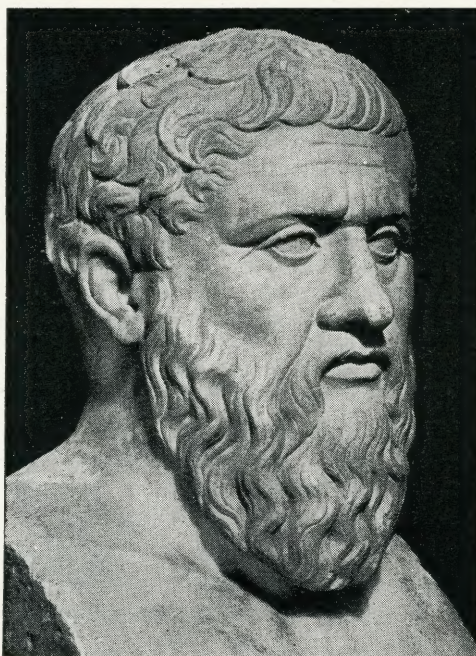


Photo: Anderson.

#### ZENO, FOUNDER OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY.

"The Hellenistic type—that is, the Oriental who combined the religious instinct of Asia with the philosophic spirit of Greece—such an Oriental as (to take two very great names) the Stoic apostle Zeno, a Phoenician of Cyprus, or the Christian apostle Saul, the Jew of Tarsus."—HOGARTH (*Ancient East*).

Comedy were against it; the Stoics and Epicureans, many of whom were slaves, condemned it as unnatural, but finding it too strong to upset, decided that it did not affect the soul and might be ignored. With the wise there was no bound or free. To the matter-of-fact Aristotle, and probably to most practical men, its abolition was inconceivable. So they declared that there were in the world men "naturally slaves." . . .

Finally, the thought of the Greeks was hampered by a want of knowledge that is almost inconceivable to us to-day. They had no knowledge of the past of mankind at all; at best they had a few shrewd guesses. They had no knowledge of geography beyond the range of the Mediterranean basin and the frontiers of Persia,



We know far more to-day of what was going on in Susa, Persepolis, Babylon, and Memphis in the time of Pericles than he did. Their astronomical ideas were still in the state of rudimentary speculations. Anaxagoras, greatly daring, thought the sun and moon were vast globes, so vast that the sun was probably "as big as all the Peloponnesus." The forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid was regarded as one of the supreme triumphs of the human mind. Their ideas in physics and chemistry were the results of profound cogitation; it is wonderful that they did guess at atomic structure. One has to remember their extraordinary poverty in the matter of experimental apparatus. They had coloured glass for ornament, but no white glass; no accurate means of measuring the minor intervals of time, no really efficient numerical notation, no very accurate scales, no rudiments of telescope or microscope. A modern scientific man dumped down in the Athens of Pericles would have found the utmost difficulty in demonstrating the elements of his knowledge, however crudely, to the men he would have found there. He would have had to rig up the simplest apparatus under every disadvantage, while Socrates pointed out the absurdity of seeking Truth with pieces of wood and string and metal such as small boys use for fishing. And he would have been in constant danger of a prosecution for impiety.

Our world to-day draws upon relatively immense accumulations of knowledge of fact. In the age of Pericles scarcely the first stone of our comparatively tremendous cairn of things recorded and proved had been put in place. When we reflect upon this difference, then it ceases to be remarkable that the Greeks, with all their aptitude for political speculation, were blind to the insecurities of their civilization from without and from within, to the necessity for effective unification, to the swift rush of events that was to end for long ages these first brief freedoms of the human mind.

It is not in the results it achieved, but in the attempts it made that the true value for us of this group of Greek talkers and writers lies. It is not that they answered questions, but that they dared to ask them. Never before had man challenged his world and the way of life to which he found his birth had brought him.

Never had he said before that he could alter his conditions. Tradition and a seeming necessity had held him to life as he had found it grown up about his tribe since time immemorial. Hitherto he had taken the world as children still take the homes and habits in which they have been reared.

So in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. we perceive, most plainly in Judea and in Athens, but by no means confined to those centres, the beginnings of a moral and an intellectual process in mankind, an appeal to righteousness and an appeal to the truth from the passions and confusions and immediate appearances of existence. It is like the dawn of the sense of responsibility in a youth, who suddenly discovers that life is neither easy nor aimless. Mankind is growing up. The rest of history for three and twenty centuries is threaded with the spreading out and development and interaction and the clearer and more effective statement of these main leading ideas. Slowly more and more men apprehend the reality of human brotherhood, the needlessness of wars and cruelties and oppression, the possibilities of a common purpose for the whole of our kind. In every generation thereafter there is the evidence of men seeking for that better order to which they feel our world must come. But everywhere and wherever in any man the great constructive ideas have taken hold, the hot greeds, the jealousies, the suspicions and impatience that are in the nature of every one of us, war against the struggle towards greater and broader purposes. The last twenty-three centuries of history are like the efforts of some impulsive, hasty immortal to think clearly and live rightly. Blunder follows blunder; promising beginnings end in grotesque disappointments; streams of living water are poisoned by the cup that conveys them to the thirsty lips of mankind. But the hope of men rises again at last after every disaster. . . .

We pass on now to the story of one futile commencement, one glorious shattered beginning of human unity. There was in Alexander the Great knowledge and imagination, power and opportunity, folly, egotism, detestable vulgarity, and an immense promise, broken by the accident of his early death while men were still dazzled by its immensity.

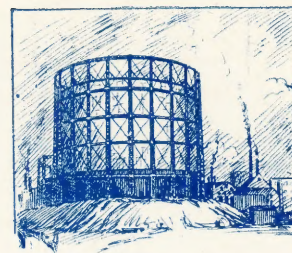


# A CENTURY OF HISTORY

## THE STORY OF A GREAT DISCOVERY

### II

#### GAS: WHAT IT IS



THE English word "gas" is derived from the Flemish "geest," or German "geist," which means "spirit," and is familiarly known in this country under the name "ghost." Many gases of different kinds have been discovered by the labours of chemists, but the particular one with which we are now concerned is that which is obtained from coal. This is a colourless, pungent, and inflammable essence composed mainly of carbon and hydrogen, those elements taking the form, broadly speaking, of fats, oil, wax, and wood.

There are two chief kinds of gas used for fuel. The first and most common is "town's gas," which is entirely composed of coal gas, or partly coal gas and partly oil or water gas; and the second is "natural gas," which is not known in England except in very small quantities. The first is made by man; the second, as the name implies, is produced by Nature herself. There are many large wells of natural gas in different parts of the United States and Canada. In Western Ontario, particularly, these wells supplied the whole of the population with gas. But, after all, natural gas has a way of becoming exhausted, and recently there has been a marked decline in Western Ontario's output from this source. Thus we learn in a message from the Toronto correspondent of *The Times*, which appeared in the issue of December 20, 1919, that the manufacturers in that part of the province are gradually being compelled to substitute either coal or electricity for working their power plants, the Government having taken steps to curtail the supply for commercial purposes in order to prolong it for domestic use.

Another case was that of the great mining community of Pittsburg, the industrial capital of Pennsylvania. "Years ago"—we quote from an interview which appeared in a London newspaper in 1912—"Pittsburg was like nothing else but an inferno of smoke and blackest fog. Then they discovered in the vicinity natural gas—cheap, handy, and useful. It was like magic. Not more than two days after its use became quite general the atmosphere cleared up, and the once black city was like a fairyland. But in ten years the natural gas was exhausted, and Pittsburg at once returned to crude coal. Again, as if by magic—this time black magic—Pittsburg became, and has remained, a veritable hell upon earth."

So much for the services of that inconstant spirit,

natural gas. "Town's gas," on the other hand, provided there is easily obtainable an ample supply of crude coal of a suitable quality, labours under no such disadvantage. The supply can, in normal times, be regulated to meet the demand.

It is necessary, in order that readers may have a complete understanding of the matter, to give certain simple chemical facts in regard to coal gas. It has a specific gravity of 0.47, and it is made up as follows:—

Hydrogen . . . . .	48.49	} Combustible and Illuminant.
Marsh Gas or Methane . . . . .	35.90	
Light-yielding Hydro-carbons . . . . .	3.83	
Carbon Monoxide . . . . .	6.61	} Inert Gases.
Carbon Dioxide . . . . .	0.12	
Nitrogen . . . . .	5.05	

When mixed with air in any proportions between one part of gas and five to fifteen parts of air, it becomes explosive. If there be less than five parts of air, the mixture will burn, but not explode; while, if it contain more than fifteen parts of air, it is too weak either to burn or to explode.

As coal gas is lighter than air, it is found useful for inflating balloons in cases where hydrogen is too expensive. This characteristic of lightness, or volatility, accounts for the fact that all gas-works are built in the lowest-lying parts of a town.

The volatile spirit of coal, then, distilled in our great gas-works, is the agent which has been responsible during the last hundred years for much of Britain's prosperity, and has, incidentally, also played a leading part in enabling the free nations of the world successfully to maintain the struggle for liberty against the attempts of Germany to rivet on them the shackles of a military tyranny. This the Coal Gas Industry did by its supreme services in the manufacture of war munitions. There seems, indeed, to be no limit to the possibilities of the Sun's essence—its kindly health-giving light and heat—which was hidden away for long ages far below the surface of the earth. It might be well, in fact, so absorbing is the interest of the subject, to return to the beginning of the story of this modern marvel, which was the secret of times primeval, and to picture its slow growth through the æons, till at last in the eighteenth century it was revealed and turned to the service of man.

(To be continued)





# The Best Investment

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## Actual Result of a Sun Life of Canada 20-year Investment Policy Matured in 1919

TWENTY years ago Mr. H. H., then 31 years of age, entered into an agreement which has turned out to be the best investment he has ever made. As the result of the transaction he has just received a sum of £1,385.

Now, to secure this welcome addition to his Capital, Mr. H. H. simply had to deposit each year for twenty years, with the Sun Life of Canada, £50 19s. On this sum he saved, each year, a proportion of his Income Tax. If this had been on present rate, the saving would have been no less than £7 10s. yearly, reducing annual deposit to £43 9s.

Altogether the Investor deposited £1,019 less tax saved (on present rate, £150) or £869 net and received £1,385. So the transaction shows a profit of £516, to which must be added a very considerable advantage, that of a free Insurance Policy for £1,000, plus half of any Deposits that have been made. This free Insurance is probably the chief factor in inducing thoughtful and far-seeing people to take up this particular form of Investment. From the moment the first Deposit is made the investor's life is insured for the Capital sum agreed upon, plus 50 per cent. of all Deposits. What other investment protects the interest of dependants so fully? Fortunately the dependants of Mr. H. H.

did not have occasion to take advantage of this arrangement, but the protection was there all the time, and things might have turned out otherwise. As it was, Mr. H. H. could himself benefit by the result of his thrift, and he is to-day firmly convinced that the transaction has been a most profitable one.

He could, had he so desired, have taken instead of cash, a Life Policy of £2,630, payable at death without any further Deposits being made; or an Annuity for Life of £112 per annum. Other options were also offered him.

The Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, which specialises in Investment-Insurance and Annuities, has plans which will appeal to almost every Investor and prove equally profitable to the one outlined. Its assets are over £20,000,000, the Investor's interests are protected in every way, not only by the Company's sound finance, but by strict Government supervision.

Anyone interested should write at once for further particulars, giving his or her own age and the amount he would be prepared to invest yearly. Communications, which will be treated in confidence, should be sent to J. F. Junkin (Manager), Sun Life of Canada, 108, Canada House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2.